

Ulrich Middeldorf



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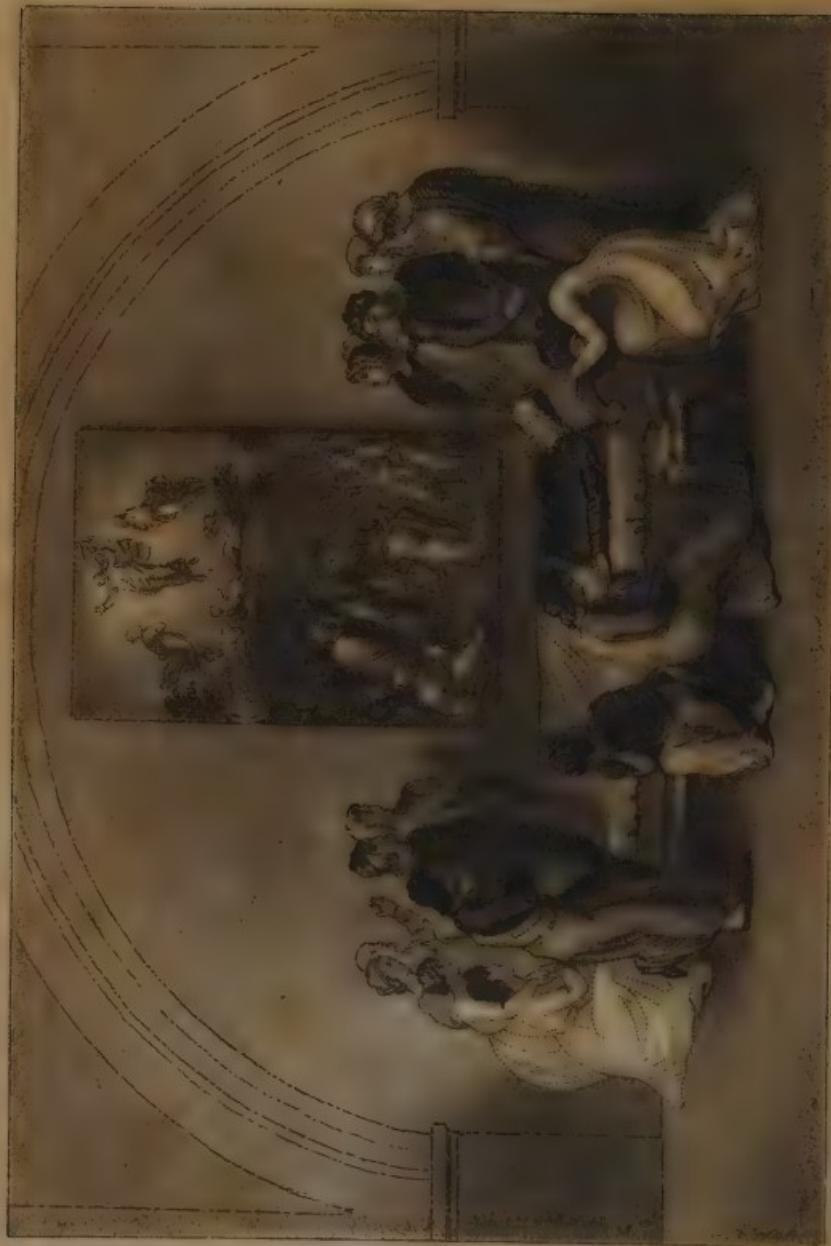
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(PHILADELPHIA)

THOMAS T. ASH CHESNUT STREET.

I T A L Y .

A Poem.

BY

S A M U E L R O G E R S .

ILLUSTRATED WITH 12 ELEGANT MEZZOTINTO ENGRAVINGS.



PHILADELPHIA:

THOMAS T. ASH—CHESNUT STREET.

Adam Waldie, Printer.

P R E F A C E.

Whatever may be the fate of this poem, it has led the author in many an after-dream through a beautiful country ; and may not, perhaps, be uninteresting to those who have learnt to live in past times as well as present, and whose minds are familiar with the events and the people that have rendered Italy so illustrious ; for, wherever he came, he could not but remember ; nor is he conscious of having slept over any ground that had been “dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue.”

Much of it was originally published as it was written on the spot. He has since revised it throughout, and added many stories from the old chroniclers, and many notes illustrative of the manners, customs, and superstitions.

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ITALY.

THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

DAY glimmer'd in the east, and the white moon
Hung like a vapour in the cloudless sky,
Yet visible, when on my way I went,
Glad to be gone—a pilgrim from the north,
Now more and more attracted as I drew
Nearer and nearer. Ere the artisan,
Drowsy, half-clad, had from his window leant,
With folded arms and listless look, to snuff
The morning air, or the caged sky-lark sung,
From his green sod up-springing—but in vain,
His tuneful bill o'erflowing with a song
Old in the days of Homer, and his wings

With transport quivering,—on my way I went,
Thy gates, Geneva, swinging heavily,
Thy gates so slow to open, swift to shut;
As on that Sabbath eve when he arrived,*¹
Whose name is now thy glory, now by thee
Inscribed to consecrate (such virtue dwells
In those small syllables) the narrow street,
His birth-place—when, but one short step too late,
He sate him down and wept—wept till the morn-
ing;²

Then rose to go—a wanderer through the world.

'T is not a tale that every hour brings with it.
Yet at a city-gate, from time to time,
Much might be learnt ; and most of all at thine,
London—thy hive the busiest, greatest, still
Gathering, enlarging still. Let us stand by,
And note who passes. Here comes one, a youth,
Glowing with pride, the pride of conscious power,
A Chatterton—in thought admired, caress'd,
And crown'd like Petrarch in the Capitol ;
Ere long to die—to fall by his own hand,
And fester with the vilest. Here come two,

* Rousseau.

Less feverish, less exalted, soon to part—
A Garrick and a Johnson ; wealth and fame
Awaiting one—even at the gate, neglect
And want the other. But what multitudes,
Urged by the love of change, and, like myself,
Adventurous, careless of to-morrow's fare,
Press on—though but a rill entering the sea,
Entering and lost ! Our task would never end.

Day glimmer'd and I went, a gentle breeze
Ruffling the Leman Lake. Wave after wave,
If such they might be call'd, dash'd as in sport,
Not anger, with the pebbles on the beach,
Making wild music, and far westward caught
The sun-beam—where, alone and as entranced,
Counting the hours, the fisher in his skiff
Lay with his circular and dotted line,
Fishing in silence. When the heart is light
With hope, all pleases, nothing comes amiss ;
And soon a passage boat swept gaily by,
Laden with peasant girls and fruits and flowers,
And many a chanticleer and partlet caged
For Vevay's market-place—a motley group
Seen through the silvery haze. But soon 't was
gone.

The shifting sail flapped idly for an instant,
Then bore them off.

I am not one of those
So dead to all things in this visible world,
So wondrously profound—as to move on
In the sweet light of heaven, like him of old³
(His name is justly in the Calendar).
Who through the day pursued this pleasant path
That winds beside the mirror of all beauty,⁴
And, when at eve his fellow-pilgrims sate,
Discoursing of the lake, ask'd where it was.
They marvell'd, as they might ; and so must all,
Seeing what now I saw ; for now 't was day,
And the bright sun was in the firmament,
A thousand shadows of a thousand hues
Chequering the clear expanse. Awhile his orb
Hung o'er thy trackless fields of snow, Mont Blanc,
Thy seas of ice and ice-built promontories,
That change their shapes for ever as in sport ;
Then travell'd onward, and went down behind
The pine-clad heights of Jura, lighting up
The woodman's casement, and perchance his axe
Borne homeward through the forest in his hand ;
And, in some deep and melancholy glen,

That dungeon-fortress never to be named,
Where, like a lion taken in the toils,
Toussaint breathed out his brave and generous
spirit.

Ah, little did he think, who sent him there,
That he himself, then greatest among men,
Should in like manner be so soon convey'd
Across the ocean—to a rock so small
Amid the countless multitude of waves,
That ships have gone and sought it, and return'd,
Saying it was not !

Still along the shore,
Among the trees I went for many a mile,
Where damsels sit and weave their fishing nets,
Singing some national song by the way-side.
But now 't was dusk, and journeying by the Rhone,
That there came down, a torrent from the Alps,
I enter'd where a key unlocks a kingdom,*
The mountains closing, and the road, the river,
Filling the narrow pass. There, till a ray
Glanced through my lattice, and the household stir
Warn'd me to rise, to rise and to depart,

* St. Maurice.

A stir unusual, and accompanied
With many a tuning of rude instruments,
And many a laugh that argued coming pleasure,
Mine host's fair daughter for the nuptial rite,
And nuptial feast attiring—there I slept,
And in my dreams wander'd once more, well
pleased.

But now a charm was on the rocks, and woods,
And waters ; for, methought, I was with those
I had at morn, at even, wish'd for there.

THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

NIGHT was again descending, when my mule,
That all day long had climb'd among the clouds,
Higher and higher still, as by a stair
Let down from heaven itself, transporting me,
Stopp'd, to the joy of both, at that low door
So near the summit of the Great St. Bernard ;
That door which ever on its hinges moved
To them that knock'd, and nightly sends abroad
Ministering spirits. Lying on the watch,
Two dogs of grave demeanour welcomed me,⁵
All meekness, gentleness, though large of limb ;
And a lay-brother of the Hospital,
Who, as we toil'd below, had heard by fits
The distant echoes gaining on his ear,
Came and held fast my stirrup in his hand,
While I alighted.

Long could I have stood,
With a religious awe contemplating
That house, the highest in the ancient world,

And placed there for the noblest purposes.
'T was a rude pile of simplest masonry,
With narrow windows and vast buttresses,
Built to endure the shocks of time and chance ;
Yet showing many a rent, as well it might,
Warr'd on for ever by the elements,
And in an evil day, nor long ago,
By violent men—when on the mountain-top
The French and Austrian banners met in conflict.

On the same rock beside it stood the church,
Reft of its cross, not of its sanctity ;
The vesper bell, for 't was the vesper hour,
Duly proclaiming through the wilderness,
“ All ye who hear, whatever be your work,
Stop for an instant—move your lips in prayer ! ”
And, just beneath it, in that dreary dale,
If dale it might be called, so near to heaven,
A little lake, where never fish leap'd up,
Lay like a spot of ink amid the snow ;
A star, the only one in that small sky,
On its dead surface glimmering. 'T was a scene
Resembling nothing I had left behind,
As though all worldly ties were now dissolved ;—

And to incline the mind still more to thought,
To thought and sadness, on the eastern shore,
Under a beetling cliff stood, half in shadow,
A lonely chapel destined for the dead,
For such as, having wander'd from their way,
Had perish'd miserably. Side by side,
Within they lie, a mournful company,
All in their shrouds, no earth to cover them ;
Their features full of life, yet motionless
In the broad day, nor soon to suffer change,
Though the barr'd windows, barr'd against the
wolf,
Are always open !

But the *Bise* blew cold ;⁶
And, bidden to a spare but cheerful meal,
I sate among the holy brotherhood
At their long board. The fare indeed was such
As is prescribed on days of abstinence,
But might have pleased a nicer taste than mine ;
And through the floor came up, an ancient matron
Serving unseen below ; while from the roof
(The roof, the floor, the walls, of native fir)
A lamp hung flickering, such as loves to fling
Its partial light on apostolic heads,

And sheds a grace on all. Theirs time as yet
Had changed not. Some were almost in the prime ;
Nor was a brow o'ercast. Seen as I saw them,
Ranged round their ample hearth-stone in an hour
Of rest, they were as gay, as free from guile,
As children ; answering, and at once, to all
The gentler impulses, to pleasure, mirth ;
Mingling, at intervals, with rational talk
Music ; and gathering news from them that came,
As of some other world. But when the storm
Rose, and the snow roll'd on in ocean billows,
When on his face the experienced traveller fell,
Sheltering his lips and nostrils with his hands,
Then all was changed ; and, sallying with their pack
Into that blank of nature, they became
Unearthly beings. “ Anselm, higher up,
Just where it drifts, a dog howls loud and long,
And now, as guided by a voice from heaven,
Digs with his feet. That noble vehemence,
Whose can it be, but his who never err'd ?
Let us to work ! there is no time to lose !—
But who descends Mont Velan ? 'T is La Croix.
Away, away ! if not, alas, too late.
Homeward he drags an old man and a boy,

Faltering and falling, and but half awaken'd,
Asking to sleep again." Such their discourse.

Oft has a venerable roof received me ;
St. Bruno's once*—where, when the winds were
hush'd,
Nor from the cataract the voice came up,
You might have heard the mole work under ground,
So great the stillness of that place ; none seen,
Save when from rock to rock a hermit cross'd
By some rude bridge—or one at midnight toll'd
To matins, and white habits, issuing forth,
Glided along those aisles interminable,
All, all observant of the sacred law
Of silence. Nor is that sequester'd spot,
Once called "Sweet Waters," now "The Shady
Vale,"†
To me unknown ; that house so rich of old,
So courteous,‡ and by two, that pass'd that way,‡
Amply requited with immortal verse,
The Poet's payment.

* The Grand Chartreuse.

† Vallombrosa, formerly called Acqua Bella.

‡ Ariosto and Milton.

But, among them all,
None can with this compare, the dangerous seat
Of generous, active virtue. What though frost
Reign everlasting, and ice and snow
Thaw not, but gather—there is that within,
Which, where it comes, makes summer; and in
thought,
Oft am I sitting on the bench beneath
Their garden-plot, where all that vegetates
Is but some scanty lettuce, to observe
Those from the South ascending, every step
As though it were their last—and instantly
Restored, renew'd, advancing as with songs,
Soon as they see, turning a lofty crag,
That plain, that modest structure, promising
Bread to the hungry,⁹ to the weary rest.

THE DESCENT.

My mule refresh'd—and, let the truth be told,
He was not of that vile, that scurvy race,
From sire to son lovers of controversy,
But patient, diligent, and sure of foot,
Shunning the loose stone on the precipice,
Snorting suspicion while with sight, smell, touch,
Examining the wet and spongy moss,
And on his haunches sitting to slide down
The steep, the smooth—my mule refresh'd, his
 bells

Gingled once more, the signal to depart,
And we set out in the gray light of dawn,
Descending rapidly—by waterfalls
Fast-frozen, and among huge blocks of ice
That in their long career had stopt mid-way.
At length, uncheck'd, unbidden, he stood still;
And all his bells were muffled. Then my guide,
Lowering his voice, address'd me : “Through this
 chasm

On and say nothing—for a word, a breath,
Stirring the air, may loosen and bring down
A winter's snow—enough to overwhelm
The horse and foot that, night and day, defiled
Along this path, to conquer at Marengo.
Well I remember how I met them here,
As the light died away, and how Napoleon,
Wrapt in his cloak—I could not be deceived—
Rein'd in his horse, and ask'd me, as I pass'd,
How far 't was to St. Remi. Where the rock
Juts forward, and the road, crumbling away,
Narrows almost to nothing at its base,
'T was there ; and down along the brink he led
To victory !—Dessaix, who turned the scale,¹⁰
Leaving his life-blood in that famous field,
(When the clouds break, we may discern the spot
In the blue haze,) sleeps as you saw at dawn,
Just as you enter'd, in the hospital-church."
So saying, for awhile he held his peace,
Awe-struck beneath that dreadful canopy ;
But soon, the danger pass'd, launch'd forth again.

JORASSE.

JORASSE was in his three-and-twentieth year ;
Graceful and active as a stag just roused ;
Gentle withal, and pleasant in his speech,
Yet seldom seen to smile. He had grown up
Among the hunters of the Higher Alps ;
Had caught their starts and fits of thoughtfulness,
Their haggard looks, and strange soliloquies,
Said to arise by those who dwell below,
From frequent dealings with the Mountain-Spirits.
But other ways had taught him better things ;
And now he number'd, marching by my side,
The savans, princes, who with him had cross'd
The frozen tract, with him familiarly
Through the rough day and rougher night con-
versed
In many a chalêt round the Peak of Terror,*
Round Tacul, Tour, Well-horn, and Rosenlau,

* The Schrékhorn.

And Her, whose throne is inaccessible,*
Who sits, withdrawn, in virgin majesty,
Nor oft unveils. Anon an avalanche
Roll'd its long thunder ; and a sudden crash,
Sharp and metallic, to the startled ear
Told that far down a continent of ice
Had burst in twain. But he had now begun ;
And with what transport he recall'd the hour,
When to deserve, to win his blooming bride,
Madelaine of Annecy, to his feet he bound
The iron crampons, and, ascending, trod
The upper realms of Frost ; then, by a cord
Let half-way down, enter'd a grot star-bright,
And gather'd from above, below, around,¹¹
The pointed crystals !

Once, nor long before,¹²
(Thus did his tongue run on, fast as his feet,
And with an eloquence that Nature gives
To all her children—breaking off by starts
Into the harsh and rude, oft as the mule
Drew his displeasure,) once, nor long before,
Alone at day-break on the Mettenberg,

* The Jungfrau.

He slipp'd, he fell ; and, through a fearful cleft
Gliding from ledge to ledge, from deep to deeper,
Went to the Under-world ! Long while he lay
Upon his rugged bed—then waked like one
Wishing to sleep again, and sleep for ever !
For, looking round, he saw or thought he saw
Innumerable branches of a cavern,
Winding beneath a solid crust of ice ;
With here and there a rent that show'd the stars !
What then, alas, was left him but to die ?
What else in those immeasurable chambers,
Strewn with the bones of miserable men,
Lost like himself ? Yet must he wander on,
Till cold and hunger set his spirit free !
And, rising, he began his dreary round ;
When, hark ! the noise as of some mighty river
Working its way to light ! Back he withdrew,
But soon return'd, and, fearless from despair,
Dash'd down the dismal channel ; and all day,
If day could be where utter darkness was,
Travell'd incessantly, the craggy roof
Just over head, and the impetuous waves,
Nor broad nor deep, yet with a giant's strength
Lashing him on. At last the water slept

In a dead lake—at the third step he took,
Unfathomable—and the roof, that long
Had threaten'd, suddenly descending, lay
Flat on the surface. Statue-like he stood,
His journey ended ; when a ray divine
Shot through his soul. Breathing a prayer to her
Whose ears are never shut, the Blessed Virgin,
He plunged, he swam—and in an instant rose,
The barrier past, in light, in sunshine ! Through
A smiling valley, full of cottages,
Glittering the river ran ; and on the bank
The young were dancing ('t was a festival day)
All in their best attire. There first he saw
His Madelaine. In the crowd she stood to hear,
When all drew round, enquiring ; and her face,
Seen behind all, and, varying, as he spoke,
With hope, and fear, and generous sympathy,
Subdued him. From that very hour he loved.

The tale was long, but coming to a close,
When his dark eyes flash'd fire, and, stopping short,
He listen'd and look'd up. I look'd up too ;
And twice there came a hiss that through me
thrill'd !

'T was heard no more. A chamois on the cliff
Had roused his fellows with that cry of fear,
And all were gone.

But now the thread was broken ;
Love and its joys had vanish'd from his mind ;
And he recounted his hair-breadth escapes
When, with his friend, Hubert of Bionnay,
(His ancient carbine from his shoulder hung,
His axe to hew a stair-case in the ice,))
He track'd their footsteps. By a cloud surprised,
Upon a crag among the precipices,
Where the next step had hurl'd them fifty fathoms,
Oft had they stood, lock'd in each other's arms,
All the long night under a freezing sky,
Each guarding each the while, from sleeping, fall-
ing.

Oh ! 't was a sport he loved dearer than life,
And only would with life itself relinquish !

“ My sire, my grandsire, died among these wilds.
As for myself,” he cried, and he held forth
His wallet in his hand, “ this do I call
My winding sheet—for I shall have no other !”

And he spoke truth. Within a little month
He lay among these awful solitudes,
('T was on a glacier—half-way up to heaven)
Taking his final rest. Long did his wife,
Suckling her babe, her only one, look out
The way he went at parting ; but he came not !
Long fear to close her eyes, lest in her sleep
(Such their belief) he should appear before her,
Frozen and ghastly pale, or crush'd and bleeding,
To tell her where he lay, and supplicate
For the last rite ! At length the dismal news
Came to her ears, and to her eyes his corse.

MARGUERITE DE TOURS.

Now the grey granite, starting through the
snow,

Discover'd many a variegated moss,*
That to the pilgrim resting on his staff
Shadows out capes and islands ; and ere long
Numberless flowers, such as disdain to live
In lower regions, and delighted drink
The clouds before they fall, flowers of all hues,
With their diminutive leaves cover'd the ground.
'T was then that, turning by an ancient larch,
Shiver'd in two, yet most majestical
With its long level branches, we observed
A human figure sitting on a stone
Far down by the way-side—just where the rock
Is riven asunder, and the Evil One
Has bridged the gulf, a wondrous monument
Built in one night, from which the flood beneath,

* Lichen Geographicus.

Raging along, all foam, is seen, not heard,
And seen as motionless !

Nearer we drew,
And 't was a woman young and delicate,
Wrapped in a russet cloak from head to foot,
Her eyes cast down, her cheek upon her hand,
In deepest thought. Young as she was, she wore
The matron-cap ; and from her shape we judged,
As well we might, that it would not be long
Ere she became a mother. Pale she look'd,
Yet cheerful ; though, methought, once, if not
twice,

She wiped away a tear that would be coming ;
And in those moments her small hat of straw,
Worn on one side, and garnish'd with a riband
Glittering with gold, but ill conceal'd a face
Not soon to be forgotten. Rising up
On our approach, she journey'd slowly on ;
And my companion, long before we met,
Knew, and ran down to greet her.

She was born
(Such was her artless tale, told with fresh tears)
In Val d'Aosta ; and an Alpine stream,
Leaping from crag to crag in its short course

To join the Dora, turn'd her father's mill.
There did she blossom till a Valaisan,
A townsman of Martigny, won her heart,
Much to the old man's grief. Long he held out,
Unwilling to resign her ; and at length,
When the third summer came, they stole a match
And fled. The act was sudden ; and when far
Away, her spirit had misgivings. Then
She pictured to herself that aged face
Sickly and wan, in sorrow, not in anger ;
And, when at last she heard his hour was near,
Went forth unseen, and burden'd as she was,
Cross'd the High Alps on foot to ask forgiveness,
And hold him to her heart before he died.
Her task was done. She had fulfill'd her wish,
And now was on her way, rejoicing, weeping.
A frame like hers had suffer'd ; but her love
Was strong within her ; and right on she went,
Fearing no ill. May all good angels guard her !
And should I once again, as once I may,
Visit Martigny, I will not forget
Thy hospitable roof, Marguerite de Tours ;
Thy sign the silver swan.* Heaven prosper thee !

* La Cygne.

THE ALPS.

Who first beholds those everlasting clouds,
Seed-time and harvest, morning, noon, and night,
Still where they were, steadfast, immoveable ;
Who first beholds the Alps—that mighty chain
Of mountains, stretching on from east to west,
So massive, yet so shadowy, so ethereal,
As to belong rather to heaven than earth—
But instantly receives into his soul
A sense, a feeling that he loses not,
A something that informs him 't is a moment
Whence he may date henceforward and for ever ?

To me they seem'd the barriers of a world,
Saying, Thus far, no farther ! and as o'er
The level plain I travell'd silently,
Nearing them more and more, day after day,
My wandering thoughts my only company,
And they before me still, oft as I look'd,
A strange delight, mingled with fear, came o'er me,



A wonder as at things I had not heard of! . . .
And still and still I felt as though I gazed
For the first time! Great was the tumult there,
Deafening the din, when in barbaric pomp
The Carthaginian on his march to Rome . . .
Entered their fastnesses. Trampling the snows,
The war-horse reared; and the tower'd elephant
Upturned his trunk into the murky sky,
Then tumbled headlong, swallowed up and lost,
He and his rider.—Now the scene is changed;
And o'er the Simplon, o'er the Splügen, winds
A path of pleasure. Like a silver zone
Flung about carelessly, it shines afar,
Catching the eye in many a broken link,
In many a turn and traverse as it glides;
And oft above and oft below appears,
Seen o'er the wall by him who journeys up,
As though it were another, through the wild
Leading along he knows not whence or whither.
Yet through its fairy course, go where it will,
The torrent stops it not, the rugged rock
Opens and lets it in; and on it runs,
Winning its easy way from clime to clime
Thro' glens lock'd up before. Not such *my* path!

The very path for them that dare defy
Danger, nor shrink, wear he what shape he will ;
That o'er the caldron, when the flood boils up,
Hang as in air, gazing and shuddering on,
Till fascination comes and the brain turns !
The very path, for them that list, to choose
Where best to plant a monumental cross,
And live in story like Empedocles ;
A track for heroes, such as he who came,
Ere long, to win, to wear the Iron Crown ;
And (if aright I judge, from what I felt
Over the Drance, just where the abbot fell,
Rolled downward in an after-dinner's sleep)
The same as Hannibal's. But now 'tis passed,
That turbulent Chaos ; and the promised land
Lies at my feet in all its loveliness !
To him who starts up from a terrible dream,
And lo, the sun is shining, and the lark
Singing aloud for joy—to him is not
Such sudden ravishment as now I feel
At the first glimpses of fair ITALY.

COMO.

I LOVE to sail along the Larian lake
Under the shore—though not to visit Pliny,
To catch him musing in his plane-tree walk,
Or angling from his window :* and, in truth,
Could I recall the ages past, and play
The fool with time, I should perhaps reserve
My leisure for Catullus on *his* lake,
Though to fare worse, or Virgil at his farm
A little further on the way to Mantua.
But such things cannot be. So I sit still
And let the boatman shift his little sail,
His sail so forked and so swallow-like,
Well pleased with all that comes. The morning air
Plays on my cheek how gently, flinging round
A silvery gleam : and now the purple mists
Rise like a curtain ; now the sun looks out,
Filling, o'erflowing with his glorious light

* Epist. I. 3. ix. 7.

This noble amphitheatre of hills ;
And now appear as on a phosphor sea
Numberless barks, from Milan, from Pavia ;
Some sailing up, some down, and some at rest,
Lading, unlading, at that small port town
Under the promontory—its tall tower
And long flat roofs, just such as Gaspar drew,
Caught by a sunbeam slanting through a cloud ;
A quay-like scene, glittering and full of life,
And doubled by reflection.

What delight,

After so long a sojourn in the wild,
To hear once more the peasant at his work !
—But in a clime like this where is he not ?
Along the shores, among the hills, 'tis now
The hey-day of the vintage ; all abroad,
But most the young and of the gentler sex,
Busy in gathering ; all among the vines,
Some on the ladder, and some underneath,
Filling their baskets of green wicker-work,
While many a canzonet and frolic laugh
Come thro' the leaves ; the vines in light festoons
From tree to tree, the trees in avenues,
And every avenue a covered walk

Hung with black clusters. 'Tis enough to make
The sad man merry, the benevolent one
Melt into tears—so general is the joy !
While up and down the cliffs, over the lake,
Wains oxen-drawn, and panniered mules are seen,
Laden with grapes and dropping rosy wine.

Here I received from thee, Basilico,
One of those courtesies so sweet, so rare !
When, as I rambled through thy vineyard ground
On the hill side, thou sent'st thy little son,
Charged with a bunch almost as big as he,
To press it on the stranger. May thy vats
O'erflow, and he, thy willing gift-bearer,
Live to become a giver ; and, at length,
When thou art full of honour and wouldst rest,
The staff of thine old age !

In a strange land

Such things, however trivial, reach the heart,
And through the heart the head, clearing away
The narrow notions that grow up at home,
And in their place grafting good will to all.
At least I found it so, nor less at eve,
When, bidden as a lonely traveller,

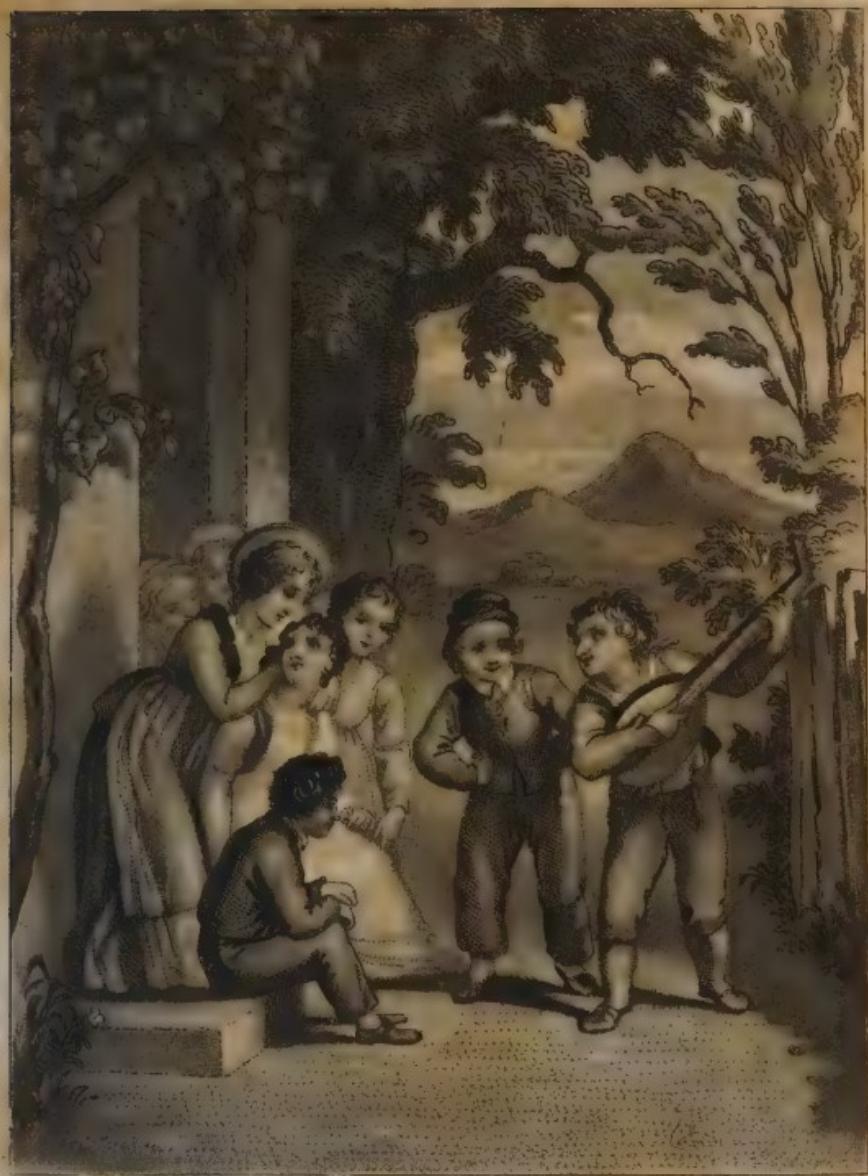
('Twas by a little boat that gave me chase
With oar and sail, as homeward bound I crossed
The bay of Tramezzine,) right readily
I turned my prow and followed, landing soon
Where steps of purest marble met the wave ;
Where, through the trellises and corridors,
Soft music came as from Armida's palace,
Breathing enchantment o'er the woods and waters ;
And through a bright pavilion, bright as day,
Forms such as hers were flitting, lost among
Such, as of old, in sober pomp swept by,
Such as adorn the triumphs and the feasts
By Paolo painted ; where a fairy queen,
That night her birth-night, from her throne re-
ceived

(Young as she was, no floweret in her crown,
Hyacinth or rose, so fair and fresh as she)
Our willing vows, and by the fountain side
Led in the dance, disporting as she pleased,
Under a starry sky—while I looked on,
As in a glade of Cashmere or Shiraz,
Reclining, quenching' my sherbet in snow,
And reading in the eyes that sparkled round,
The thousand love adventures written there.

Can I forget—no never, such a scene
So full of witchery. Night lingered still,
When, with a dying breeze, I left Bellaggio ;
But the strain followed me ; and still I saw
Thy smile, Angelica ; and still I heard
Thy voice—once and again bidding adieu.

BERGAMO.

THE song was one that I had heard before,
But where I knew not. It inclined to sadness ;
And, turning round from the delicious fare
My landlord's little daughter Barbara
Had from her apron just rolled out before me,
Figs and rock-melons—at the door I saw
Two boys of lively aspect. Peasant-like
They were, and poorly clad, but not unskilled ;
With their small voices and an old guitar,
Winning their way to my unguarded heart
In that, the only universal tongue.
But soon they changed the measure, entering on
A pleasant dialogue of sweet and sour,
A war of words, with looks and gestures waged,
Between Trappanti and his ancient dame,
Mona Lucilia. To and fro it went ;
While many a titter on the stairs was heard,
And Barbara's among them. When it ceased
Their dark eyes flashed no longer, yet methought,



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In many a glance as from the soul, disclosed
More than enough to serve them. Far or near,
Few looked not for their coming ere they came,
Few, when they went, but looked till they were
gone ;
And not a matron, sitting at her wheel,
But could repeat their story. Twins they were,
And orphans, as I learnt, cast on the world ;
Their parents lost in an old ferry-boat
That, three years since last Martinmas, went down,
Crossing the rough Benacus.*

May they live

Blameless and happy—rich they cannot be,
Like him who, in the days of minstrelsy,†
Came in a beggar's weeds to Petrarch's door,
Asking, beseeching for a lay to sing,
And soon in silk (such then the power of song)
Returned to thank him ; or like that old man,
Old not in heart, who by the torrent side
Descending from the Tyrol, as night fell,
Knocked at a city gate near the hill-foot—

* Lago di Garda.

† Petrarch, Epist. Rer. Sen. i. v. ep. 3.

The gate that bore so long, sculptured in stone,
An eagle on a ladder—and at once
Found welcome ; nightly in the bannered hall,
Tuning his harp to tales of chivalry
Before the great Mastino and his guests,*
The three-and-twenty kings, by adverse fate,
By war or treason or domestic strife,
Reft of their kingdoms, friendless, shelterless,
And living on his bounty.

But who comes,

Brushing the floor with what was once, methinks,
A hat of ceremony. On he glides,
Slip-shod, ungartered ; his long suit of black,
Dingy, thread-bare, tho' patch by patch renewed,
Till it has almost ceased to be the same.
At length arrived, and with a shrug that pleads
“ ‘Tis my necessity !” he stops and speaks,
Screwing a smile into his dinnerless face.
“ Blame not a poet, Signor, for his zeal—
When all are on the wing, who would be last ?
The splendour of thy name has gone before thee ;
And Italy from sea to sea exults;

* See note.

As well indeed she may ! But I transgress.
He, who has known the weight of praise himself,
Should spare another." Saying so, he laid
His sonnet, an impromptu, at my feet,
(If his, then Petrarch must have stolen it from him)
And bowed and left me ; in his hollow hand
Receiving my small tribute, a zecchine,
Unconsciously, as doctors do their fees.

My omelet, and a flagon of hill-wine,
Pure as the virgin spring, had happily
Fled from all eyes ; or, in a waking dream,
I might have sat as many a great man has,
And many a small, like him of Santillane,
Bartering my bread and salt for empty praise.

ITALY.

AM I in Italy ? Is this the Mincius ?
Are those the distant turrets of Verona ?
And shall I sup where Juliet at the Masque
First saw and loved, and now by him who came
That night a stranger, sleeps from age to age ?
Such questions hourly do I ask myself ;
And not a stone, in a cross-way, inscribed
“ To Mantua”—“ To Ferrara”—but excites
Surprise, and doubt, and self-congratulation.

O Italy, how beautiful thou art !
Yet I could weep—for thou art lying, alas,
Low in the dust ; and we admire thee now
As we admire the beautiful in death.
Thine was a dangerous gift, when thou wast born,
The gift of beauty. Would thou hadst it not ;
Or wert as once, awing the caitiffs vile
That now beset thee, making thee their slave !
Would they had lov'd thee less or fear'd thee more !

But why despair? Twice hast thou lived already;
Twice shone among the nations of the world,
As the sun shines among the lesser lights
Of heaven; and shalt again. The hour shall come
When they who think to bind the ethereal spirit,
Who, like the eagle cowering o'er his prey,
Watch with quick eye, and strike and strike again,
If but a sinew vibrate—shall confess
Their wisdom folly. Even now the flame
Bursts forth where once it burnt so gloriously,
And, dying, left a splendour like the day,
That like the day diffused itself, and still
Blesses the earth—the light of genius, virtue,
Greatness in thought and act, contempt of death,
God-like example. Echoes that have slept
Since Athens, Lacedæmon, were themselves,
Since men invoked “by those in Marathon!”
Awake along the Ægean; and the dead,
They of that sacred shore, have heard the call,
And thro’ the ranks, from wing to wing, are seen
Moving as once they were—instead of rage
Breathing deliberate valour.

COLL'ALTO.

“ In this neglected mirror (the broad frame
Of massy silver serves to testify
That many a noble matron of the house
Has sat before it) once, alas, was seen
What led to many sorrows. From that time
The bat came hither for a sleeping place ;
And he, that cursed another in his heart,
Said, ‘ Be thy dwelling, thro’ the day and night,
Shunned like Coll’alto.’ ”—’Twas in that old pile,
Which flanks the cliff with its grey battlements
Flung here and there, and, like an eagle’s nest,
Hangs in the Trevisan, that thus the steward,
Shaking his locks, the few that time had left,
Addressed me, as we entered what was called
“ My lady’s chamber.” On the walls, the chairs,
Much yet remained of the rich tapestry ;
Much of the adventures of Sir Lancelot
In the green glades of some enchanted wood.
The toilet-table was of silver wrought,

Florentine art, when Florence was renowned ;
A gay confusion of the elements,
Dolphins and boys, and shells and fruits and flowers :
And from the ceiling, in his gilded cage,
Hung a small bird of curious workmanship,
That, when his mistress bade him, would unfold
(So says the babbling dame, Tradition, there)
His emerald wings, and sing and sing again
The song that pleased her. While I stood and
looked,
A gleam of day yet lingering in the west,
The steward went on. "She had ('tis now long
since)
A gentle serving-maid, the fair Cristine,
Fair as a lily, and as spotless too ;
None so admired, beloved. They had grown up
As play-fellows ; and some there were that said,
Some that knew much, discoursing of Cristine,
'She is not what she seems.' When unrequired,
She would steal forth ; her custom, her delight,
To wander through and through an ancient grove
Self-planted half way down, losing herself
Like one in love with sadness ; and her veil
And vesture white, seen ever in that place,

Ever, as surely as the hours came round,
Among those reverend trees, gave her below
The name of The White Lady. But the day
Is gone, and I delay thee.

In that chair

The countess, as it might be now, was sitting,
Her gentle serving-maid, the fair Cristine,
Combing her golden hair ; and through this door
The count, her lord, was hastening, called away
By letters of great urgency to Venice ;
When in the glass she saw, as she believed,
('Twas an illusion of the evil spirit—
Some say he came and crossed it at the time)
A smile, a glance at parting, given and answered,
That turned her blood to gall. That very night
The deed was done. That night, ere yet the moon
Was up on Monte Calvo, and the wolf
Baying as still he does (oft is he heard,
An hour and more by the old turret clock)
They led her forth, the unhappy lost Cristine,
Helping her down in her distress—to die.

No blood was spilt ; no instrument of death
Lurked, or stood forth, declaring its bad purpose ;
Nor was a hair of her unblemished head

Hurt in that hour. Fresh as a flower just blown,
And warm with life, her youthful pulses playing,
She was walled up within the castle wall.
The wall itself was hollowed secretly ;
Then closed again, and done to line and rule.
Would'st thou descend ? 'Tis in a darksome vault
Under the chapel : and there nightly now,
As in the narrow niche, when smooth and fair,
And as though nothing had been done or thought,
The stone-work rose before her, till the light
Glimmered and went—there, nightly, at that hour,
(Thou smil'st, and would it were an idle tale !)
In her white veil and vesture white, she stands
Shuddering—her eyes uplifted, and her hands
Joined as in prayer ; then, like a blessed soul
Bursting the tomb, springs forward, and away
Flies o'er the woods and mountains. Issuing forth,
The hunter meets her in his hunting track ;
The shepherd on the heath, starting, exclaims
(For still she bears the name she bore of old)
‘ ‘Tis the White Lady ! ”

VENICE.

THERE is a glorious city in the sea.

The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing , and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.

No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the sea,
Invisible ; and from the land we went,

As to a floating city—steering in,
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently—by many a dome
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky ;
By many a pile in more than eastern pride,
Of old the residence of merchant-kings ;
The fronts of some, tho' time had shattered them,
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,
As though the wealth within them had run o'er.

Thither I came, and in a wondrous ark,
(That, long before we slipt our cable, rang

As with the voices of all living things,)
From Padua, where the stars are, night by night,
Watched from the top of an old dungeon-tower,
Whence blood ran once, the tower of Ezzelin—
Not as he watched them, when he read his fate
And shuddered. But of him I thought not then,
Him or his horoscope ; far, far from me
The forms of guilt and fear ; tho' some were there,
Sitting among us round the cabin board,
Some who, like him, had cried, “ Spill blood
enough !”

And could shake long at shadows. They had played
Their parts at Padua, and were floating home,
Careless and full of mirth ; to-morrow a day
Not in their calendar. Who, in a strain
To make the hearer fold his arms and sigh,
Sings “ Caro, Caro !”—’Tis the Prima Donna,
And to her monkey, smiling in his face,
Who, as transported, cries, “ Brava ! Ancora !”
’Tis a grave personage, an old macaw,
Perched on her shoulder.—But who leaps ashore,
And with a shout urges the lagging mules ;
Then climbs a tree that overhangs the stream,
And, like an acorn, drops on deck again ?

'Tis he who speaks not, stirs not, but we laugh ;
 That child of fun and frolic, Arlecchino.
 And mark their poet—with what emphasis
 He prompts the young Soubrette, conning her part !
 Her tongue plays truant, and he raps his box,
 And prompts again ; for ever looking round
 As if in search of subjects for his wit,
 His satire ; and as often whispering
 Things, though unheard, not unimaginable.

Had I thy pencil, Crabbe, (when thou hast done,
 Late may it be . . . it will, like Prospero's staff,
 Be buried fifty fathoms in the earth,)
 I would portray the Italian—now I cannot.
 Subtle, discerning, eloquent, the slave
 Of love, of hate, for ever in extremes ;
 Gentle when unprovoked, easily won,
 But quick in quarrel—through a thousand shades
 His spirit flits, cameleon-like ; and mocks
 The eye of the observer.

Gliding on,

At length we leave the river for the sea.
 At length a voice aloft proclaims “Venezia !”
 And, as called forth, she comes.—A few in fear,
 Flying away from him whose boast it was,*

* Attila.

That the grass grew not where his horse had trod,
Gave birth to Venice. Like the water-fowl,
They built their nests among the ocean waves ;
And where the sands were shifting, as the wind
Blew from the north or south—where they that
came,

Had to make sure the ground they stood upon,
Rose, like an exhalation from the deep,
A vast metropolis, with glistering spires,
With theatres, basilicas adorned ;
A scene of light and glory, a dominion,
That has endured the longest among men.

And whence the talisman, whereby she rose,
Towering ? 'Twas found there in the barren sea.
Want led to enterprise ; and, far or near,
Who met not the Venetian ? now among
The Ægean Isles, steering from port to port,
Landing and bartering ; now, no stranger there,
In Cairo, or without the eastern gate,
Ere yet the Cafila* came, listening to hear
Its bells approaching from the Red Sea coast ;
Then on the Euxine, and that smaller sea

* A Caravan.

Of Azoph, in close converse with the Russ
And Tartar ; on his lowly deck receiving
Pearls from the Persian Gulf, gems from Golcond ;
Eyes brighter yet, that shed the light of love,
From Georgia, from Circassia. Wandering round,
When in the rich bazaar he saw, displayed,
Treasures from climes unknown, he asked and
learnt,
And, travelling slowly upward, drew ere long
From the well-head, supplying all below ;
Making the imperial city of the east,
Herself, his tributary.

If we turn
To those black forests, 'where, thro' many an age,
Night without day, no axe the silence broke,
Or seldom, save where Rhine or Danube rolled ;
Where o'er the narrow glen a castle hangs,
And, like the wolf that hungered at his door,
The baron lived by rapine—there we meet,
In warlike guise, the caravan from Venice ;
When on its march, now lost and now beheld,
A glittering file (the trumpet heard, the scout
Sent and recalled) but at a city gate
All gaiety, and looked for ere it comes ;

Winning regard with all that can attract,
Cages, whence every wild cry of the desert,
Jugglers, stage-dancers. Well might Charlemain
And his brave peers, each with his visor up,
On their long lances lean and gaze awhile,
When the Venetian to their eyes disclosed
The wonders of the east! Well might they then
Sigh for new conquests!

Thus did Venice rise,
Thus flourish, till the unwelcome tidings came,
That in the Tagus had arrived a fleet
From India, from the region of the sun,
Fragrant with spices—that a way was found,
A channel opened, and the golden stream
Turned to enrich another. Then she felt
Her strength departing, yet a while maintained
Her state, her splendour; till a tempest shook
All things most held in honour among men,
All things the giant with the scythe had spared,
To their foundations, and at once she fell;
She who had stood yet longer than the last
Of the four kingdoms—who, as in an ark,
Had floated down, amid a thousand wrecks,
Uninjured, from the old world to the new,

From the last glimpse of civilised life, to where
Light shone again, and with the blaze of noon.

Thro' many an age in the mid-sea she dwelt,
From her retreat calmly contemplating
The changes of the earth, herself unchanged.
Before her passed, as in an awful dream,
The mightiest of the mighty. What are these,
Clothed in their purple? O'er the globe they fling
Their monstrous shadows; and, while yet we speak,
Phantom-like, vanish with a dreadful scream!
What—but the last that styled themselves the
Cæsars?

And who in long array (look where they come,
Their gestures menacing so far and wide)
Wear the green turban and the heron's plume?
Who—but the caliphs? followed fast by shapes
As new and strange—emperor, and king, and czar,
And soldan—each, with a gigantic stride,
Trampling on all the flourishing works of peace
To make his greatness greater, and inscribe
His name in blood—some, men of steel, steel-clad;
Others, nor long, alas, the interval,
In light and gay attire, with brow serene
Wielding Jove's thunder, scattering sulphurous fire

Mingled with darkness ; and, among the rest,
Lo, one by one, passing continually,
Those who assume a sway beyond them all ;
Men gray with age, each in a triple crown,
And in his tremulous hands grasping the keys
That can alone, as he would signify,
Unlock heaven's gate.

LUIGI.

HAPPY is he who loves companionship,
And lights on thee, Luigi. Thee I found
Playing at Mora on the cabin-roof
With Punchinello. 'Tis a game to strike
Fire from the coldest heart. What then from thine?
And, ere the twentieth throw, I had resolved,
Won by thy looks. Thou wert an honest lad;
Wert generous, grateful, not without ambition.
Had it depended on thy will alone,
Thou wouldest have numbered in thy family
At least six Doges and the first in fame.
But that was not to be. In thee I saw
The last, if not the least, of a long line,
Who in their forest, for three hundred years,
Had lived and laboured, cutting, charring wood;
Discovering where they were, to those astray,
By the re-echoing stroke, the crash, the fall,
Or the blue wreath that travelled slowly up
Into the sky. Thy nobler destinies

Led thee away to justle in the crowd ;
And there I found thee—by thine own advice
Trying once more a change of air and diet,
Crossing the sea, and springing to the shore
As though thou knewst where to dine and sleep.

First in Bologna didst thou plant thyself,
Serving behind a cardinal's gouty chair,
Listening and oft replying, jest for jest ;
Then in Ferrara, every thing by turns,
So great thy genius and so Proteus-like !
Now serenading in a lover's train,
And measuring swords with his antagonist ;
Now carving, cup-bearing, in halls of state ;
And now a guide to the lorn traveller,
A very Cicerone—yet, alas,
How unlike him who fulminated in old Rome !
Dealing out largely, in exchange for pence,
Thy scraps of knowledge—thro' the grassy street
Leading, explaining—pointing to the bars
Of Tasso's dungeon, and the Latin verse,
Graven in the stone that yet denotes the door
Of Ariosto.

Many a year is gone
Since on the Rhine we parted ; yet, methinks,

I can recall thee to the life, Luigi,
In our long journey ever by my side ;
Thy locks jet-black, and clustering round a face
Open as day, and full of manly daring.
Thou hadst a hand, a heart, for all that came,
Herdsman or pedler, monk or muleteer ;
And few there were that met thee not with smiles.
Mishap passed o'er thee like a summer cloud.
Cares thou hadst none ; and they, that stood to
 hear thee,
Caught the infection and forgot their own.
Nature conceived thee in her merriest mood,
Her happiest—not a speck was in the sky ;
And at thy birth the cricket chirped, Luigi,
Thine a perpetual voice—at every turn
A larum to the echo. In a clime
Where all were gay, none were so gay as thou ;
Thou, like a babe, hushed only by thy slumbers ;
Up hill and down, morning and noon and night,
Singing or talking ; singing to thyself
When none gave ear, but to the listener talking.

ST. MARK'S PLACE.

OVER how many tracts, vast, measureless,
Ages on ages roll, and none appear
Save the wild hunter ranging for his prey ;
While on this spot of earth, the work of man,
How much has been transacted ! Emperors, popes,
Warriors, from far and wide, laden with spoil,
Landing, have here performed their several parts,
Then left the stage to others. Not a stone
In the broad pavement, but to him who has
An eye, an ear for the inanimate world,
Tells of past ages.

In that temple-porch,
(The brass is gone, the porphyry remains,) Did Barbarossa fling his mantle off,
And, kneeling, on his neck receive the foot
Of the proud pontiff—thus at last consoled
For flight, disguise, and many an aguish shake
On his stone pillow. In that temple-porch,
Old as he was, so near his hundredth year,

And blind—his eyes put out—did Dandolo
Stand forth, displaying on his crown the cross.
There did he stand, erect, invincible,
Tho' wan his cheeks, and wet with many tears,
For in his prayers he had been weeping much ;
And now the pilgrims and the people wept
With admiration, saying in their hearts,
“ Surely those aged limbs have need of rest !”
—There did he stand; with his old armour on,
Ere, gonfalon in hand, that streamed aloft,
As conscious of its glorious destiny,
So soon to float o'er mosque and minaret,
He sailed away, five hundred gallant ships,
Their lofty sides hung with emblazoned shields,
Following his track to fame. He went to die ;
But of his trophies four arrived ere long,
Snatched from destruction—the four steeds divine,
That strike the ground, resounding with their feet,
And from their nostrils snort ethereal flame
Over that very portal—in the place
Where, in an after-time, beside the doge,
Sat one yet greater,* one whose verse shall live

* Petrarch.

When the wave rolls o'er Venice. High he sat,
High over all, close by the ducal chair,
At the right hand of his illustrious host,
Amid the noblest daughters of the realm,
Their beauty shaded from the western ray
By many-coloured hangings ; while, beneath,
Knights of all nations, some of fair renown
From England, from victorious Edward's court,
Their lances in the rest, charged for the prize.

Here, among other pageants, and how oft
It met the eye, borne through the gazing crowd,
As if returning to console the least,
Instruct the greatest, did the doge go round ;
Now in a chair of state, now on his bier.
They were his first appearance, and his last.

The sea, that emblem of uncertainty,
Changed not so fast for many and many an age,
As this small spot. To-day 't was full of masks ;
And lo, the madness of the carnival,
The monk, the nun, the holy legate masked !
To-morrow came the scaffold and the wheel ;
And he died there by torch-light, bound and gagged,
Whose name and crime they knew not. Underneath
Where the archangel, as alighted there,

Blesses the city from the topmost tower,
His arms extended—there, in monstrous league,
Two phantom-shapes were sitting, side by side,
Or up, and, as in sport, chasing each other ;
Horror and Mirth. Both vanished in one hour !
But Ocean only, when again he claims
His ancient rule, shall wash away their footsteps.

Enter the palace by the marble stairs
Down which the grizzly head of old Falièr
Rolled from the block. Pass onward thro' the hall,
Where, among those drawn in their ducal robes,
But one is wanting—where, thrown off in heat,
A brief inscription on the doge's chair
Led to another on the wall as brief ;
And thou wilt track them—wilt, from rooms of
state,

Where kings have feasted, and the festal song
Rung through the fretted roof, cedar and gold,
Step into darkness ; and be told, “ 'T was here,
Trusting, deceived, assembled but to die,
To take a long embrace and part again,
Carrara and his valiant sons were slain ;
He first—then they, whose only crime had been
Struggling to save their father.” Thro' that door,

So soon to cry, smiting his brow, “ I’m lost !”
Was with all courtesy, all honour, shown
The great and noble captain, Carmagnola.—
That deep descent (thou canst not yet discern
Aught as it is) leads to the dripping vaults
Under the flood, where light and warmth were
never !

Leads to a covered bridge, the Bridge of Sighs ;
And to that fatal closet at the foot,
Lurking for prey, which, when a victim came,
Grew less and less, contracting to a span ;
An iron door, urged onward by a screw,
Forcing out life.—But let us to the roof,
And, when thou hast surveyed the sea, the land,
Visit the narrow cells that cluster there,
As in a place of tombs. There burning suns,
Day after day, beat unrelentingly ;
Turning all things to dust, and scorching up
The brain, till reason fled, and the wild yell
And wilder laugh burst out on every side,
Answering each other as in mockery !

—Few houses of the size were better filled ;
Though many came and left it in an hour.
“ Most nights,” so said the good old Nicolo,

(For three-and-thirty years his uncle kept
The water-gate below, but seldom spoke,
Though much was on his mind,) “most nights
arrived

The prison-boat, that boat with many oars,
And bore away as to the lower world,
Disburdening in the canal Orfano,
That drowning-place, where never net was thrown,
Summer or winter, death the penalty ;
And where a secret, once deposited,
Lay till the waters should give up their dead.”

Yet what so gay as Venice ? Every gale
Breathed music ! and who flocked not, while she
reigned,
To celebrate her nuptials with the sea ;
To wear the mask, and mingle in the crowd
With Greek, Armenian, Persian—night and day
(There, and there only, did the hour stand still,) Pursuing, through her thousand labyrinths,
The enchantress Pleasure ; realising dreams,
The earliest, happiest—for a tale to catch
Credulous ears, and hold young hearts in chains,
Had only to begin, “ There lived in Venice ”—
“ Who were the six we supped with yesternight ? ”*

* See Note.

Kings, one and all ! Thou couldst not but remark
The style and manner of the six that served them.”
“ Who answered me just now ? Who, when I said
‘ T is nine,’ turned round and said so solemnly,
‘ Signor, he died at nine ! ’ T was the Armenian ;
The mask that follows thee, go where thou wilt.”

“ But who moves there alone among them all ??”
“ The Cypriot. Ministers from distant courts
Beset his doors, long ere his rising hour ;
His the great secret ! Not the golden house
Of Nero, nor those fabled in the east,
Rich though they were, so wondrous rich as his !
Two dogs, coal-black, in collars of pure gold,
Walk in his footsteps—who but his familiars ?
He casts no shadow, nor is seen to smile !

And mark him speaking. They that listen stand
As if his tongue dropped honey ; yet his glance
None can endure ! He looks nor young nor old ;
And at a tourney where I sat and saw,
A very child (full threescore years are gone)
Borne on my father’s shoulder through the crowd,
He looked not otherwise. Where’er he stops,
Though short the sojourn, on his chamber wall,
Mid many a treasure gleaned from many a clime,

His portrait hangs—but none must notice it ;
For Titian glows in every lineament,
(Where is it not inscribed, The work is his !)
And Titian died two hundred years ago."

Such their discourse. Assembling in St. Mark's,
All nations met as on enchanted ground !
What tho' a strange mysterious power was there,
Moving throughout, subtle, invisible,
And universal as the air they breathed ;
A power that never slumbered, nor forgave,
All eye, all ear, no where and every where,
Entering the closet and the sanctuary,
No place of refuge for the doge himself ;
Most present when least thought of—nothing dropt
In secret, when the heart was on the lips,
Nothing in feverish sleep, but instantly
Observed and judged—a power, that if but named
In casual converse, be it where it might,
The speaker lowered at once his eyes, his voice,
And pointed upward as to God in heaven——
What tho' that power was there, he who lived thus,
Pursuing pleasure, lived as if it were not.
But let him in the midnight air indulge
A word, a thought against the laws of Venice,
And in that hour he vanished from the earth !

THE GONDOLA.

Boy, call the Gondola ; the sun is set.—
It came, and we embarked ; but instantly,
As at the waving of a magic wand,
Though she had stept on board so light of foot,
So light of heart, laughing she knew not why,
Sleep overcame her ; on my arm she slept.
From time to time I waked her ; but the boat
Rocked her to sleep again. The moon was now
Rising full-orbed, but broken by a cloud.
The wind was hushed, and the sea mirror-like.
A single zephyr, as enamoured, played
With her loose tresses, and drew more and more
Her veil across her bosom. Long I lay
Contemplating that face so beautiful,
That rosy mouth, that cheek dimpled with smiles,
That neck but half concealed, whiter than snow.
'T was the sweet slumber of her early age.
I looked and looked, and felt a flush of joy
I would express but cannot. Oft I wished

Gently—by stealth—to drop asleep myself,
And to incline yet lower that sleep might come;
Oft closed my eyes as in forgetfulness.

'T was all in vain. Love would not let me rest.

But how delightful when at length she waked !
When, her light hair adjusting, and her veil
So rudely scattered, she resumed her place
Beside me ; and, as gaily as before,
Sitting unconsciously nearer and nearer,
Poured out her innocent mind !

So, nor long since,
Sung a Venetian : and his lay of love,*
Dangerous and sweet, charmed Venice. For my-
self,

(Less fortunate, if love be happiness)

No curtain drawn, no pulse beating alarm,
I went alone beneath the silent moon ;
Thy square, St. Mark, thy churches, palaces,
Glittering and frost-like, and, as day drew on,
Melting away, an emblem of themselves.

Those porches passed, thro' which the water-breeze

* La Biondina in Gondoletta.

Plays, though no longer on the noble forms
That moved there, sable-vested—and the quay,
Silent, grass-grown,—adventurer-like I launched
Into the deep, ere long discovering
Isles, such as cluster in the southern seas,
All verdure. Every where, from bush and brake,
The musky odour of the serpents came ;
Their slimy track across the woodman's path
Bright in the moonshine : and, as round I went,
Dreaming of Greece, whither the waves were
gliding,

I listened to the venerable pines
Then in close converse, and, if right I guessed,
Delivering many a message to the winds
In secret, for their kindred on Mount Ida.

Nor when again in Venice, when again
In that strange place, so stirring and so still,
Where nothing comes to drown the human voice
But music, or the dashing of the tide,
Ceased I to wander. Now a Jessica
Sung to her lute, her signal as she sat
At her half-open window. Then, methought,
A serenade broke silence, breathing hope
Thro' walls of stone, and torturing the proud heart

Of some Priuli. Once, we could not err,
(It was before an old Palladian house,
As between night and day we floated by)
A Gondolier lay singing ; and he sung,
As in the time when Venice was herself,
Of Tancred and Erminia. On our oars
We rested ; and the verse was verse divine !
We could not err—perhaps he was the last—
For none took up the strain, none answered him ;
And when he ceased, he left upon my ear
A something like the dying voice of Venice !

The moon went down, and nothing now was seen
Save where the lamp of a Madonna shone
Faintly—or heard, but when he spoke, who stood
Over the lantern at the prow and cried,
Turning the corner of some reverend pile,
Some school or hospital of old renown,
Though haply none were coming, none were near,
“Hasten or slacken.”* But at length night fled ;
And with her fled, scattering, the sons of pleasure.
Star after star shot by, or, meteor-like,
Crossed me and vanished—lost at once among

* Premi o stali.

Those hundred isles that tower majestically,
That rise abruptly from the water mark,
Not with rough crag, but marble, and the work
Of noblest architects. I lingered still ;
Nor sought my threshold, till the hour was come
And past, when, flitting home in the gray light,
The young Bianca found her father's door,
That door so often with a trembling hand,
So often—then so lately left ajar,
Shut ; and, all terror, all perplexity,
Now by her lover urged; now by her love,
Fled o'er the waters to return no more.

THE BRIDES OF VENICE.

It was St. Mary's eve, and all poured forth
For some great festival. The fisher came
From his green islet, bringing o'er the waves
His wife and little one ; the husbandman
From the firm land, with many a friar and nun,
And village maiden, her first flight from home,
Crowding the common ferry. All arrived ;
And in his straw the prisoner turned and listened,
So great the stir in Venice. Old and young
Thronged her three hundred bridges ; the grave
Turk,
Turbaned, long-vested, and the cozening Jew,
In yellow hat and thread-bare gaberdine,
Hurrying along. For, as the custom was,
The noblest sons and daughters of the state,
Whose names are written in the Book of Gold,
Were on that day to solemnise their nuptials.



At noon a distant murmur through the crowd,
Rising and rolling on, proclaimed them near ;
And never from their earliest hour was seen
Such splendour or such beauty. Two and two,
(The richest tapestry unrolled before them)
First came the brides ; each in her virgin-veil,
Nor unattended by her bridal maids,
The two that, step by step, behind her bore
The small but precious caskets that contained
The dowry and the presents. On she moved,
Her eyes cast down, and holding in her hand
A fan, that gently waved, of ostrich plumes.
Her veil, transparent as the gossamer,
Fell from beneath a starry diadem ;
And on her dazzling neck a jewel shone,
Ruby or diamond, or dark amethyst ;
A jewelled chain, in many a winding wreath,
Wreathing her gold brocade.

Before the church,

That venerable structure now no more
On the sea-brink, another train they met,
No strangers, nor unlooked for ere they came,
Brothers to some, still dearer to the rest ;
Each in his hand bearing his cap and plume,

And, as he walked, with modest dignity
Folding his scarlet mantle. At the gate
They join ; and slowly up the bannered aisle
Led by the choir, with due solemnity
Range round the altar. In his vestments there
The Patriarch stands ; and, while the anthem flows,
Who can look on unmoved—the dream of years
Just now fulfilling ? Here a mother weeps,
Rejoicing in her daughter. There a son
Blesses the day that is to make her his ;
While she shines forth through all her ornament,
Her beauty heightened by her hopes and fears.

At length the rite is ending. All fall down,
All of all ranks ; and, stretching out his hands,
Apostle-like, the holy man proceeds
To give the blessing—not a stir, a breath ;
When hark, a din of voices from without,
And shrieks and groans and outcries as in battle !
And lo, the door is burst, the curtain rent,
And armed ruffians, robbers from the deep,
Savage, uncouth, led on by Barbaro,
And his six brothers in their coats of steel,
Are standing on the threshold ! Statue-like,
Awhile they gaze upon the fallen multitude,

Each with his sabre up, in act to strike ;
Then, as at once recovering from the spell,
Rush forward to the altar, and as soon
Are gone again—amid no clash of arms
Bearing away the maidens and the treasures.

Where are they now ?—ploughing the distant
waves,

Their sails out-spread and given to the wind,
They on their decks triumphant. On they speed,
Steering for Istria ; their accursed barks
(Well are they known, the galliot and the galley,) Freighted, alas, with all that life endears !
The richest argosies were poor to them !

Now hadst thou seen along that crowded shore
The matrons running wild, their festal dress
A strange and moving contrast to their grief ;
And through the city, wander where thou wouldest,
The men half armed and arming—every where,
As roused from slumber by the stirring trump ;
One with a shield, one with a casque and spear ;
One with an axe severing in two the chain
Of some old pinnace. Not a raft, a plank,
But on that day was drifting. In an hour
Half Venice was afloat. But long before,

Frantic with grief, and scorning all control,
The youths were gone in a light brigantine,
Lying at anchor near the arsenal ;
Each having sworn, and by the holy rood,
To slay or to be slain.

And from the tower
The watchman gives the signal. In the east
A ship is seen and making for the port ;
Her flag St. Mark's. And now she turns the point,
Over the waters like a sea-bird flying !
Ha, 't is the same, 't is theirs ! from stern to prow
Green with victorious wreaths, she comes to bring
All that was lost. Coasting, with narrow search,
Friuli—like a tiger in his spring,
They had surprised the Corsairs where they lay
Sharing the spoil in blind security,
And casting lots—had slain them, one and all,
All to the last, and flung them far and wide
Into the sea, their proper element ;
Him first, as first in rank, whose name so long
Had hushed the babes of Venice, and who yet,
Breathing a little, in his look retained
The fierceness of his soul.

Thus were the brides

Lost and recovered ; and what now remained
But to give thanks ? Twelve breast-plates and
twelve crowns,

By the young victors to their patron-saint
Vowed in the field, inestimable gifts
Flaming with gems and gold, were in due time,
Laid at his feet ; and ever to preserve
The memory of a day so full of change,
From joy to grief, from grief to joy again,
Through many an age, as oft as it came round,
'T was held religiously. The Doge resigned
His crimson for pure ermine, visiting
At earliest dawn St. Mary's silver shrine ;
And through the city, in a stately barge
Of gold, were borne with songs and symphonies
Twelve ladies, young and noble. Clad they were
In bridal white with bridal ornaments,
Each in her glittering veil ; and on the deck,
As on a burnished throne they glided by ;
No window or balcony but adorned
With hangings of rich texture, not a roof
But covered with beholders, and the air
Vocal with joy. Onward they went, their oars
Moving in concert with the harmony,

Through the Rialto to the ducal palace,
And at a banquet, served with honour there,
Sat representing, in the eyes of all,
Eyes not unwet, I ween, with grateful tears,
Their lovely ancestors, the Brides of Venice.

FOSCARI.

LET us lift up the curtain, and observe
What passes in that chamber. Now a sigh,
And now a groan is heard. Then all is still.
Twenty are sitting as in judgment there ;
Men who have served their country, and grown grey
In governments and distant embassies,
Men eminent alike in war and peace ;
Such as in effigy shall long adorn
The walls of Venice—to show what she was !
Their garb is black, and black the arras is,
And sad the general aspect. Yet their looks
Are calm, are cheerful ; nothing there like grief,
Nothing or harsh or cruel. Still that noise,
That low and dismal moaning.

Half withdrawn,
A little to the left, sits one in crimson,
A venerable man, fourscore and five.
Cold drops of sweat stand on his furrowed brow.
His hands are clenched ; his eyes half shut and
glazed ;

His shrunk and withered limbs rigid as marble.
'Tis Foscari the Doge. And there is one,
A young man, lying at his feet, stretched out
In torture. 'Tis his son. 'Tis Giacomo,
His only joy, (and has he lived for this?)
Accused of murder. Yesternight the proofs,
If proofs they be, were in the lion's mouth
Dropt by some hand unseen ; and he himself
Must sit and look on a beloved son
Suffering the question.—Twice, to die in peace,
To save, while yet he could, a falling house,
And turn the hearts of his fell adversaries,
Those who had now, like hell-hounds in full cry,
Chased down his last of four,—twice did he ask
To lay aside the crown, and they refused,
An oath exacting, never more to ask ;
And there he sits, a spectacle of woe,
Condemned in bitter mockery to wear
The bauble he had sighed for.—Once again
The screw is turned ; and, as it turns, the son
Looks up, and, in a faint and broken tone,
Murmurs “ My father ! ” The old man shrinks back,
And in his mantle muffles up his face.
“ Art thou not guilty ? ” says a voice, that once

Would greet the sufferer long before they met ;
“ Art thou not guilty ?”—“ No ! Indeed I am not ! ”
But all is unavailing. In that court
Groans are confessions ; patience, fortitude,
The work of magic ; and, released, revived,
For condemnation, from his father’s lips
He hears the sentence, “ Banishment to Candia.
Death if he leaves it.” And the bark sets sail ;
And he is gone from all he loves in life !
Gone in the dead of night—unseen of any—
Without a word, a look of tenderness,
To be called up when in his lonely hours
He would indulge in weeping. Like a ghost,
Day after day, year after year, he haunts
An ancient rampart, that o’erhangs the sea ;
Gazing on vacancy, and hourly there
Starting as from some wild and uncouth dream,
To answer to the watch. Alas, how changed
From him, the mirror of the youth of Venice !
Whom in the slightest thing, or whim or chance,
Did he but wear his doublet so and so,
All followed ; at whose nuptials, when he won
That maid at once the noblest, fairest, best,
A daughter of the house that now among

Its ancestors in monumental brass
Numbers eight doges—to convey her home,
The Bùcentaur went forth ; and thrice the sun
Shone on the chivalry that, front to front,
And blaze on blaze reflecting, met and ranged
To tourney in St. Marks. But lo, at last,
Messengers come. He is recalled : his heart
Leaps at the tidings. He embarks : the boat
Springs to the oar, and back again he goes—
Into that very chamber ! there to lie
In his old resting place, the bed of steel ;
And thence look up (five long, long years of grief
Have not killed either) on his wretched sire,
Still in that seat—as though he had not stirred ;
Immoveable, and muffled in his cloak.

But now he comes, convicted of a crime
Great by the laws of Venice. Night and day,
Brooding on what he had been, what he was,—
'T was more than he could bear. His longing fits
Thickened upon him. His desire for home
Became a madness ; and, resolved to go,
If but to die, in his despair he writes
A letter to the sovereign prince of Milan,
(To him whose name, among the greatest now,



Had perished, blotted out at once and rased,
But for the rugged limb of an old oak,)
Soliciting his influence with the state,
And drops it to be found.—“Would ye know all?
I have transgressed, offended wilfully ;
And am prepared to suffer as I ought.
But let me, let me, if but for an hour,
(Ye must consent—for all of you are sons,
Most of you husbands, fathers,) let me first
Indulge the natural feelings of a man,
And, ere I die, if such my sentence be,
Press to my heart ('tis all I ask of you)
My wife, my children—and my aged mother—
Say, is she yet alive?” He is condemned
To go ere set of sun, go whence he came,
A banished man ; and for a year to breathe
The vapour of a dungeon. But his prayer
(What could they less?) is granted. In a hall
Open and crowded by the common herd,
'T was there a wife and her four sons, yet young,
A mother borne along, life ebbing fast,
And an old doge, mustering his strength in vain,
Assembled now, sad privilege, to meet
One so long lost, one who for them had braved,

For them had sought—death, and yet worse than
death ;
To meet him, and to part with him for ever !—
Time and their wrongs had changed them all, him
most ;

Yet when the wife, the mother looked again,
'T was he—'t was he himself, t' was Giacomo !
And all clung round him, weeping bitterly ;
“ Weeping the more, because they wept in vain.”

Unnerved, and now unsettled in his mind
From long and exquisite pain, he sobs and cries,
Kissing the old man's cheek, “ Help me, my father !
Let me, I pray thee, live once more among ye :
Let me go home.” “ My son,” returns the doge,
Mastering his grief, “ if thou art indeed my son,
Obey. Thy country wills it.”

Giacomo

That night embarked ; sent to an early grave
For one whose dying words, “ The deed was mine !
He is most innocent ! 'T was I who did it !”
Came when he slept in peace. The ship, that sailed
Swift as the winds with his deliverance,
Bore back a lifeless corpse. Generous as brave,
Affection, kindness, the sweet offices

Of duty and love were from his tenderest years
To him as needful as his daily bread ;
And to become a by-word in the streets,
Bringing a stain on those who gave him life,
And those, alas, now worse than fatherless—
To be proclaimed a ruffian, a night stabber,
He on whom none before had breathed reproach—
He lived but to disprove it. That hope lost,
Death followed. Oh, if justice be in heaven,
A day must come of ample retribution !

Then was thy cup, old man, full to the brim.
But thou wert yet alive ; and there was one,
The soul and spring of all that enmity,
Who would not leave thee ; fastening on thy flank,
Hungering and thirsting, still unsatisfied ;
One of a name illustrious as thine own !
One of the Ten ! one of the Invisible Three !
'T was Loredano. When the whelps were gone,
He would dislodge the lion from his den ;
And, leading on the pack he long had led,
The miserable pack that ever howled
Against fallen greatness, moved that Foscari
Be Doge no longer ; urging his great age ;
Calling the loneliness of grief neglect

Of duty, sullenness against the laws.

"I am most willing to retire," said he;

"But I have sworn, and cannot of myself.

Do with me as ye please." He was deposed,

He, who had reigned so long and gloriously;

His ducal bonnet taken from his brow,

His robes stript off, his seal and signet-ring

Broken before him. But now nothing moved

The meekness of his soul. All things alike!

Among the six that came with the decree,

Foscari saw one he knew not, and enquired

His name. "I am the son of Marco Memmo."

"Ah," he replied, "thy father was my friend."

And now he goes. "It is the hour and past.

I have no business here." — "But wilt thou not

Avoid the gazing crowd? That way is private."

"No! as I entered, so will I retire."

And, leaning on his staff, he left the house,

His residence for five-and-thirty years,

By the same stairs up which he came in state;

Those where the giants stand, guarding the ascent,

Monstrous, terrific. At the foot he stopt,

And, on his staff still leaning, turned and said,

"By mine own merits did I come. I go,

Driven by the malice of mine enemies.'
Then to his boat withdrew, poor as he came,
Amid the sighs of them that dared not speak.

This journey was his last. When the bell rang
At dawn, announcing a new Doge to Venice,
It found him on his knees before the Cross,
Clasping his aged hands in earnest prayer ;
And there he died. Ere half its task was done,
It rang his knell.

But whence the deadly hate
That caused all this—the hate of Loredano ?
It was a legacy his father left,
Who, but for Foscari, had reigned in Venice,
And, like the venom in the serpent's bag,
Gathered and grew ! Nothing but turned to hate !
In vain did Foscari supplicate for peace,
Offering in marriage his fair Isabel.
He changed not, with a dreadful piety
Studying revenge : listening to those alone
Who talked of vengeance ; grasping by the hand
Those in their zeal (and none were wanting there)
Who came to tell him of another wrong,
Done or imagined. When his father died,
They whispered, ' 'Twas by poison !' and the words

Struck him as uttered from his father's grave.
He wrote it on the tomb ('tis there in marble)
And with a brow of care, most merchant-like,
Among the debtors in his leger-book
Entered at full (nor month, nor day forgot)
‘ Francesco Foscari—for my Father's death.’
Leaving a blank—to be filled up hereafter.
When Foscari's noble heart at length gave way,
He took the volume from the shelf again
Calmly, and with his pen filled up the blank,
Inscribing, ‘ He has paid me.’

Ye who sit
Brooding from day to day, from day to day
Chewing the bitter cud, and starting up
As tho' the hour was come to whet your fangs,
And, like the Pisan, gnaw the hairy scalp
Of him who had offended—if ye must,
Sit and brood on; but O forbear to teach
The lesson to your children.

MARCOLINI.

It was midnight; the great clock had struck, and was still echoing through every porch and gallery in the quarter of St. Mark, when a young citizen, wrapt in his cloak, was hastening home under it from an interview with his mistress. His step was light, for his heart was so. Her parents had just consented to their marriage; and the very day was named. "Lovely Giulietta!" he cried. "And shall I then call thee mine at last? Who was ever so blest as thy Marcolini?" But as he spoke, he stopped; for something glittered on the pavement before him. It was a scabbard of rich workmanship; and the discovery, what was it but an earnest of good fortune? "Rest thou there!" he cried, thrusting it gaily into his belt. "If another claims thee not, thou hast changed masters!" and on he went as before, humming the burden of a song which he and his Giulietta had been singing together. But how little we know what the next minute will bring forth! He turned by the church of

St. Geminiano, and in three steps met the watch. A murder had just been committed. The senator Renaldi had been found dead at his door, the dagger left in his heart ; and the unfortunate Marcolini was dragged away for examination. The place, the time, every thing served to excite, to justify suspicion ; and no sooner had he entered the guard house than a damning witness appeared against him. The bravo in his flight had thrown away his scabbard ; and smeared with blood, with blood not yet dry, it was now in the belt of Marcolini. Its patrician ornaments struck every eye ; and when the fatal dagger was produced and compared with it, not a doubt of his guilt remained. Still there is in the innocent an energy, a composure, an energy when they speak, a composure when they are silent, to which none can be altogether insensible ; and the judge delayed for some time to pronounce the sentence, though he was the near relation of the dead. At length, however, it came ; and Marcolini lost his life, Giulietta her reason.

Not many years afterwards the truth revealed itself, the real criminal in his last moments confessing the crime ; and hence the custom in Venice, a custom that long prevailed, for a crier to cry out in

the court before a sentence was passed, “Ricordatevi del povero Marcolini!”*

Great indeed was the lamentation throughout the city ; and the judge, dying, directed that thenceforth and for ever a mass should be sung every night in a chapel of the Ducal Church for his own soul and the soul of Marcolini, and the souls of all who had suffered by an unjust judgment. Some land on the Brenta was left by him for the purpose : and still is the mass sung in the chapel ; still every night, when the great square is illuminating, and the casinos are filling fast with the gay and the dissipated, a bell is rung as for a service, and a ray of light seen to issue from a small gothic window that looks towards the place of execution, the place where on a scaffold Marcolini breathied his last.

* “Remember the poor Marcolini!”

ARQUA.

Three leagues from Padua stands, and long has
stood

(The Paduan student knows it, honours it)

A lonely tomb beside a mountain-church ;

And I arrived there as the sun declined

Low in the west. The gentle airs, that breathe

Fragrance at eve, were rising, and the birds

Singing their farewell-song—the very song

They sung the night that tomb received a tenant ;

When, as alive, clothed in his canon's stole,

And slowly winding down the narrow path,

He came to rest there. Nobles of the land,

Princes and prelates, mingled in his train,

Anxious by any act, while yet they could,

To catch a ray of glory by reflection ;

And from that hour have kindred spirits flocked

From distant countries, from the north, the south,

To see where he is laid.

Twelve years ago,
When I descended the impetuous Rhone,
Its vineyards of such great and old renown,*
Its castles, each with some romantic tale,
Vanishing fast—the pilot at the stern,
He who had steered so long, standing aloft,
His eyes on the white breakers, and his hands
On what was now his rudder, now his oar,
A huge misshapen plank—the bark itself
Frail and uncouth, launched to return no more ;
Such as a shipwrecked man might hope to build,
Urged by the love of home—Twelve years ago,
When like an arrow from the cord we flew,
Two long, long days, silence, suspense on board,
It was to offer at thy fount, Vaucluse,
Entering the arched Cave, to wander where
Petrarch had wandered, to explore and sit
Where in his peasant-dress he loved to sit,
Musing, reciting—on some rock moss-grown,
Or the fantastic root of some old beech,
That drinks the living waters as they stream
Over their emerald-bed ; and could I now

* The Cote Rotie, the Hermitage, &c.

Neglect the place where, in a graver mood,
When he had done and settled with the world,
When all the illusions of his youth were fled,
Indulged perhaps too much, cherished too long,
He came for the conclusion ? Half way up
He built his house, whence as by stealth he caught,
Among the hills, a glimpse of busy life
That soothed, not stirred.—But knock, and
enter in.

This was his chamber. 'Tis as when he went ;
As if he now were in his orchard grove.
And this his closet. Here he sat and read.
This was his chair ; and in it, unobserved,
Reading, or thinking of his absent friends,
He passed away as in a quiet slumber.

Peace to this region ! Peace to each, to all !
They know his value—every coming step,
That draws the gazing children from their play,
Would tell them if they knew not.—But could
aught,

Ungentle or ungenerous, spring up
Where he is sleeping ; where, and in an age
Of savage warfare and blind bigotry,
He cultured all that could refine, exalt ;
Leading to better things ?

GINEVRA.

If thou shouldst ever come by choice or chance
To Modena, where still religiously
Among her ancient trophies is preserved
Bologna's bucket (in its chain it hangs
Within that reverend tower, the Guirlandine)
Stop at a palace near the Reggio-gate,
Dwelt in of old by one of the Orsini.
Its noble gardens, terrace above terrace,
And rich in fountains, statues, cypresses,
Will long detain thee ; thro' their arched walks,
Dim at noon-day, discovering many a glimpse
Of knights and dames, such as in old romance,
And lovers, such as in heroic song,
Perhaps the two, for groves were their delight,
That in the spring time, as alone they sat,
Venturing together on a tale of love,
Read only part that day.*—A summer-sun
Sets ere one half is seen ; but, ere thou go,

* Inferno. V.

Enter the house—prythee, forget it not—
And look awhile upon a picture there.

'Tis of a lady in her earliest youth,
The very last of that illustrious race,
Done by Zampieri*—but I care not whom.
He, who observes it—ere he passes on,
Gazes his fill, and comes and comes again,
That he may call it up, when far away.

She sits, inclining forward as to speak,
Her lips half open, and her finger up,
As though she said ' Beware ! ' her vest of gold
Broidered with flowers, and clasped from head to
foot,

An emerald stone in every golden clasp ;
And on her brow, fairer than alabaster,
A coronet of pearls. But then her face,
So lovely, yet so arch, so full of mirth,
The overflowings of an innocent heart—
It haunts me still, though many a year has fled,
Like some wild melody !

Alone it hangs
Over a mouldering heir-loom, its companion,
An oaken chest, half eaten by the worm,

* Commonly called Domenichino.

But richly carved by Antony of Trent
With scripture-stories from the life of Christ ;
A chest that came from Venice, and had held
The ducal robes of some old ancestor.
That by the way—it may be true or false—
But don't forget the picture ; and thou wilt not,
When thou hast heard the tale they told me there.

She was an only child ; from infancy
The joy, the pride of an indulgent sire.
Her mother dying of the gift she gave,
That precious gift, what else remained to him ?
The young Ginevra was his all in life,
Still as she grew, for ever in his sight ;
And in her fifteenth year became a bride,
Marrying an only son, Francesco Doria,
Her playmate from her birth, and her first love.

Just as she looks there in her bridal dress,
She was all gentleness, all gaiety,
Her pranks the favourite theme of every tongue.
But now the day was come, the day, the hour ;
Now, frowning, smiling, for the hundredth time,
The nurse, that ancient lady, preached decorum ;
And in the lustre of her youth, she gave
Her hand, with her heart in it, to Francesco.

Great was the joy ; but at the bridal feast,
When all sat down, the bride was wanting there.
Nor was she to be found ! Her father cried,
'Tis but to make a trial of our love ?
And filled his glass to all ; but his hand shook,
And soon from guest to guest the panic spread.
'Twas but that instant she had left Francesco,
Laughing and looking back and flying still,
Her ivory tooth imprinted on his finger.
But now, alas, she was not to be found ;
Nor from that hour could any thing be guessed,
But that she was not !

Weary of his life,
Francesco flew to Venice, and forthwith
Flung it away in battle with the Turk.*
Orsini lived ; and long might'st thou have seen
An old man wandering as in quest of something,
Something he could not find—he knew not what.
When he was gone, the house remained awhile
Silent and tenantless—then went to strangers.

Full fifty years were past, and all forgot,
When on an idle day, a day of search
Mid the old lumber in the gallery,
That mouldering chest was noticed ; and 'twas said

By one as young, as thoughtless as Ginevra,
“ Why not remove it from its lurking place ? ”
’Twas done as soon as said ; but on the way
It burst, it fell ; and lo, a skeleton,
With here and there a pearl, an emerald stone,
A golden clasp, clasping a shred of gold.
All else had perished—save a nuptial ring,
And a small seal, her mother’s legacy,
Engraven with a name, the name of both,
“ Ginevra.”

There then had she found a grave !
Within that chest had she concealed herself,
Fluttering with joy, the happiest of the happy ;
When a spring-lock, that lay in ambush there,
Fastened her down for ever !

BOLOGNA,

"Twas night ; the noise and bustle of the day
Were o'er. The mountebank no longer wrought
Miraculous cures—he and his stage were gone ;
And he who, when the crisis of his tale
Came, and all stood breathless with hope and fear,
Sent round his cap ; and he who thrummed his wire
And sang, with pleading look and plaintive strain
Melting the passenger. Thy thousand cries,*
So well portrayed and by a son of thine,
Whose voice had swelled the hubbub in his youth,
Were hushed, Bologna, silence in the streets,
The squares, when hark, the clattering of fleet
hoofs ;
And soon a courier, posting as from far,
Housing and holster, boot and belted coat

* See the Cries of Bologna, as drawn by Annibal Carracci. He was of very humble origin ; and, to correct his brother's vanity, once sent him a portrait of their father, the tailor, threading his needle.

And doublet, stained with many a various soil,
Stopt and alighted. 'Twas where hangs aloft
That ancient sign, the pilgrim, welcoming
All who arrived there, all perhaps save those
Clad like himself, with staff and scallop-shell,
Those on a pilgrimage. And now approached
Wheels, through the lofty porticoes resounding,
Arch beyond arch, a shelter or a shade
As the sky changes. To the gate they came.
And, ere the man had half his story done,
Mine host received the Master—one long used
To sojourn among strangers, every where
(Go where he would, along the wildest track)
Flinging a charm that shall not soon be lost,
And leaving footsteps to be traced by those
Who love the haunts of Genius ; one who saw,
Observed, nor shunned the busy scenes of life,
But mingled not, and mid the din, the stir,
Lived as a separate spirit.

Much had passed
Since last we parted ; and those five short years—
Much had they told ! His clustering locks were
turn'd
Grey ; nor did aught recall the youth that swam

From Sestos to Abydos. Yet his voice,
Still it was sweet ; still from his eye the thought
Flashed lightning-like, nor lingered on the way,
Waiting for words. Far, far into the night
We sat, conversing—no unwelcome hour,
The hour we met ; and, when Aurora rose,
Rising, we climbed the rugged Apennine.

Well I remember how the golden sun
Filled with its beams the unfathomable gulfs,
As on we travelled, and along the ridge,
'Mid groves of cork and cistus and wild-fig,
His motley household came—Not last nor least,
Battista, who upon the moonlight-sea
Of Venice, had so ably, zealously,
Served, and, at parting, thrown his oar away
To follow through the world ; who without stain
Had worn so long that honourable badge,*
The gondolier's, in a patrician house
Arguing unlimited trust.—Not last nor least,
Thou, tho' declining in thy beauty and strength,
Faithful Moretto, to the latest hour

* The principal gondolier, il fante di poppa, was almost always in the confidence of his master, and employed on occasions that required judgment and address.

Guarding his chamber-door, and now along
The silent, sullen strand of Missolonghi
Howling in grief.

He had just left that place
Of old renown, once in the Adrian sea,*
Ravenna ! where, from Dante's sacred tomb
He had so oft, as many a verse declares,†
Drawn inspiration ; where, at twilight-time,
Through the pine-forest wandering with loose rein,
Wandering and lost, he had so oft beheld‡
(What is not visible to a poet's eye ?)—
The spectre-knight, the hell-hounds and their prey,
The chase, the slaughter, and the festal mirth
Suddenly blasted. 'Twas a theme he loved,
But others claimed their turn ; and many a tower,
Shattered, uprooted from its native rock,
Its strength the pride of some heroic age,
Appeared and vanished (many a sturdy steer§
Yoked and unyoked) while as in happier days
He poured his spirit forth. The past forgot,

* Adrianum mare.—Cic. † See the Prophecy of Dante.

‡ See the tale as told by Boccaccio and Dryden.

§ They wait for the traveller's carriage at the foot of every hill.

All was enjoyment. Not a cloud obscured
Present or future.

He is now at rest ;
And praise and blame fall on his ear alike,
Now dull in death. Yes, Byron, thou art gone,
Gone like a star that through the firmament
Shot and was lost, in its eccentric course
Dazzling, perplexing. Yet thy heart, methinks,
Was generous, noble—noble in its scorn
Of all things low or little ; nothing there
Sordid or servile. If imagined wrongs
Pursued thee, urging thee sometimes to do
Things long regretted, oft, as many know,
None more than I, thy gratitude would build
On slight foundations : and, if in thy life
Not happy, in thy death thou surely wert,
Thy wish accomplished ; dying in the land
Where thy young mind had caught ethereal fire,
Dying in Greece, and in a cause so glorious !

They in thy train—ah, little did they think,
As round we went, that they so soon should sit
Mourning beside thee, while a nation mourned,
Changing her festal for her funeral song ;
That they so soon should hear the minute-gun,

As morning gleamed on what remained of thee,
Roll o'er the sea, the mountains, numbering
Thy years of joy and sorrow.

Thou art gone ;

And he who would assail thee in thy grave,
Oh, let him pause ! For who among us all,
Tried as thou wert—even from thine earliest
years,

When wandering, yet unspoilt, a highland-boy—
Tried as thou wert, and with thy soul of flame ;
Pleasure, while yet the down was on thy cheek,
Uplifting, pressing, and to lips like thine,
Her charmed cup—ah, who among us all
Could say, he had not erred as much, and more ?

FLORENCE.

Of all the fairest cities of the earth
None is so fair as Florence. 'Tis a gem
Of purest ray ; and what a light broke forth,
When it emerged from darkness ! Search within,
Without ; all is enchantment ! 'Tis the past
Contending with the present ; and in turn
Each has the mastery.

In this chapel wrought
One of the few, Nature's interpreters,
The few, whom Genius gives as lights to shine,
Massaccio ; and he slumbers underneath.
Wouldst thou behold his monument ? Look round !
And know that where we stand, stood oft and long,
Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself,
He and his haughty rival*—patiently,
Humbly, to learn of those who came before,

* Michael Angelo.

To steal a spark from their authentic fire,
Theirs who first broke the universal gloom,
Sons of the morning.—On that ancient seat,*
The seat of stone that runs along the wall,
South of the church, east of the belfry-tower,
(Thou canst not miss it,) in the sultry time
Would Dante sit conversing, and with those
Who little thought that in his hand he held
The balance, and assigned at his good pleasure
To each his place in the invisible world,
To some an upper region, some a lower ;
Many a transgressor sent to his account,
Long ere in Florence numbered with the dead ;
The body still as full of life and stir
At home, abroad ; still and as oft inclined
To eat, drink, sleep ; still clad as others were,
And at noon-day, where men were wont to meet,
Met as continually ; when the soul went,
Relinquished to a demon, and by him
(So says the bard, and who can read and doubt ?)
Dwelt in and governed.—Sit thee down awhile ;
Then, by the gates so marvellously wrought,

* A tradition.

That they might serve to be the gates of heaven,
Enter the Baptistry. That place he loved,
Loved as his own ;* and in his visits there
Well might he take delight ! For when a child,
Playing, as many are wont, with venturous feet
Near and yet nearer to the sacred font,
Slipped and fell in, he flew and rescued him,
Flew with an energy, a violence,
That broke the marble—a mishap ascribed
To evil motives ; his, alas, to lead
A life of trouble, and ere long to leave
All things most dear to him, ere long to know
How salt another's bread is, and the toil
Of going up and down another's stairs.†

Nor then forget that chamber of the dead,
Where the gigantic shapes of night and day,
Turned into stone, rest everlastinglly ;
Yet still are breathing, and shed round at noon
A two-fold influence—only to be felt—
A light, a darkness, mingling each with each ;
Both and yet neither. There, from age to age,
Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.

* Mia bel Giovanni. Inferno. 19.

† Paradiso. 17.

That is the Duke Lorenzo. Mark him well.
He meditates, his head upon his hand.
What from beneath his helm-like bonnet scowls ?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless scull ?
'Tis lost in shade ; yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates, and is intolerable.
His mien is noble, most majestical !
Then most so, when the distant choir is heard
At morn or eve—nor fail thou to attend
On that thrice-hallowed day, when all are there ;
When all, propitiating with solemn songs,
Visit the dead. Then wilt thou feel his power !
But let not sculpture, painting, poesy,
Or they, the masters of these mighty spells,
Detain us. Our first homage is to Virtue.
Where, in what dungeon of the citadel,
(It must be known—the writing on the wall
Cannot be gone—'twas with the blade cut in,
Ere, on his knees to God, he slew himself,)
Did he, the last, the noblest citizen,*
Breathe out his soul, lest in the torturing hour
He might accuse the guiltless ?—That debt paid

* Filippo Strozzi.

But with a sigh, a tear for human frailty,
We may return, and once more give a loose
To the delighted spirit, worshipping,
In her small temple of rich workmanship,*
Venus herself, who, when she left the skies,
Came hither.

* *The Tribune.*

DON GARZIA.

Among those awful forms, in elder time
Assembled, and through many an after page
Destined to stand as Genii of the place
Where men most meet in Florence, may be seen
His who first played the tyrant. Clad in mail,
But with his helmet off—in kingly state,
Aloft he sits upon his horse of brass ;
And they, that read the legend underneath,
Go and pronounce him happy.* Yet, methinks,
There is a chamber that, if walls could speak,
Would turn their admiration into pity.
Half of what passed, died with him ; but the rest
All he discovered when the fit was on,
All that, by those who listened, could be gleaned
From broken sentences and starts in sleep,
Is told, and by an honest chronicler.†

* Cosmo, the first Grand Duke. † De Thou.

Two of his sons, Giovanni and Garzia,
(The oldest had not seen his nineteenth summer,) Went to the chase; but only one returned.
Giovanni, when the huntsman blew his horn
O'er the last stag that started from the brake,
And in the heather turned to stand at bay,
Appeared not; and at close of day was found
Bathed in his innocent blood. Too well, alas,
The trembling Cosmo guessed the deed, the doer;
And, having caused the body to be borne
In secret to that chamber—at an hour
When all slept sound, save she who bore them
both,*

Who little thought of what was yet to come,
And lived but to be told—he bade Garzia
Arise and follow him. Holding in one hand
A winking lamp, and in the other a key
Massive and dungeon-like, thither he led;
And, having entered in and locked the door,
The father fixed his eyes upon the son,
And closely questioned him. No change betrayed
Or guilt or fear. Then Cosmo lifted up

* Eleonora di Toledo.

The bloody sheet. "Look there ! Look there!"
he cried.

"Blood calls for blood—and from a father's hand !—Unless thyself wilt save him that sad office. What !" he exclaimed, when, shuddering at the sight,

The boy breathed out, "I stood but on my guard." "Dar'st thou then blacken one who never wronged thee,

Who would not set his foot upon a worm ?—Yes, thou must die, lest others fall by thee, And thou shouldst be the slayer of us all."

Then from Garzia's belt he drew the blade, That fatal one which spilt his brother's blood ; And, kneeling on the ground, "Great God !" he cried,

"Grant me the strength to do an act of justice.

Thou knowst what it costs me ; but, alas,
How can I spare myself, sparing none else ?

Grant me the strength, the will—and oh forgive
The sinful soul of a most wretched son.

'Tis a most wretched father that implores it."

Long on Garzia's neck he hung and wept,
Long pressed him to his bosom tenderly ;

And then, but while he held him by the arm,
Thrusting him backward, turned away his face,
And stabbed him to the heart.

Well might a youth,*

Studious of men, anxious to learn and know,
When in the train of some great embassy
He came, a visitant to Cosmo's court,
Think on the past ; and, as he wandered through
The ample spaces of an ancient house,†
Silent, deserted—stop awhile to dwell
Upon two portraits there, drawn on the wall
Together, as of two in bonds of love,
Those of the unhappy brothers, and conclude
From the sad looks of him who could have told
The terrible truth.—Well might he heave a sigh
For poor humanity, when he beheld
That very Cosmo shaking o'er his fire,
Drowsy and deaf and inarticulate,
Wrapt in his night gown, o'er a sick man's mess,
In the last stage—death-struck and deadly pale;
His wife, another, not his Eleanor,
At once his nurse and his interpreter.

* De Thou.

† The Palazzo Vecchio. Cosmo had left it several years before.

THE CAMPAGNA OF FLORENCE.

'Tis morning. Let us wander through the fields,
Where Cimabue found a shepherd-boy*
Tracing his idle fancies on the ground;
And let us from the top of Fiesole,
Whence Galileo's glass by night observed
The phases of the moon, look round below
On Arno's vale, where the dove-coloured steer
Is ploughing up and down among the vines,
While many a careless note is sung aloud,
Filling the air with sweetness—and on thee,
Beautiful Florence, all within thy walls,
Thy groves and gardens, pinnacles and towers,
Drawn to our feet.

From that small spire, just caught
By the bright ray, that church among the rest
By one of old distinguished as The Bride,†

* Giotto.

† Santa Maria Novella. For its grace and beauty it was called by Michael Angelo 'La Sposa.'

Let us in thought pursue (what can we better?)
Those who assembled there at matin-time;*
Who, when Vice revelled, and along the street
Tables were set, what time the bearer's bell
Rang to demand the dead at every door,
Came out into the meadows; and, awhile
Wandering in idleness, but not in folly,
Sat down in the high grass and in the shade
Of many a tree sun-proof—day after day,
When all was still and nothing to be heard
But the cicala's voice among the olives,
Relating in a ring, to banish care,
Their hundred tales. Round the green hill they
went,
Round underneath—first to a splendid house,
Gherardi, as an old tradition runs,
That on the left, just rising from the vale;
A place for luxury—the painted rooms,
The open galleries and middle court
Not unprepared, fragrant and gay with flowers.
Then westward to another, nobler yet;
That on the right, now known as the Palmieri,

* In the year of the great plague. See the Decameron.

Where Art with Nature vied—a paradise,
With verdurous walls, and many a trellised walk
All rose and jasmine, many a twilight glade
Crossed by the deer. Then to the Ladies' Vale ;
And the clear lake, that as by magic seemed
To lift up to the surface every stone
Of lustre there, and the diminutive fish
Innumerable, dropt with crimson and gold,
Now motionless, now glancing to the sun.

Who has not dwelt on their voluptuous day ?
The morning-banquet by the fountain side,
While the small birds rejoiced on every bough ;
The dance that followed, and the noon-tide slumber ;
Then the tales told in turn, as round they lay
On carpets, the fresh waters murmuring ;
And the short interval of pleasant talk
Till supper-time, when many a syren voice
Sung down the stars ; and, as they left the sky,
The torches, planted in the sparkling grass,
And every where among the glowing flowers,
Burnt bright and brighter.

He,* whose dream it was,

* Boccaccio.

(It was no more) sleeps in a neighbouring vale ;
 Sleeps in the church, where, in his ear I ween,
 The friar poured out his wondrous catalogue ;*—
 A ray, imprimis, of the star that shone
 To the wise men ; a phial-ful of sounds,
 The musical chimes of the great bells that hung
 In Solomon's temple ; and, though last not least,
 A feather from the angel Gabriel's wing,
 Dropt in the Virgin's chamber. That dark ridge,
 Stretching south-east, conceals it from my sight ;
 Not so his lowly roof and scanty farm,
 His copse and rill, if yet a trace be left,
 Who lived in Val di Pesa, suffering long
 Want and neglect and (far, far worse) reproach,
 With calm, unclouded mind.† The glimmering
 tower

On the grey rock beneath, his land-mark once,
 Now serves for ours, and points out where he ate
 His bread with cheerfulness. Who sees him not
 ('Tis his own sketch—he drew it from himself)
 Laden with cages from his shoulder slung,
 And sallying forth, while yet the morn is grey,

* Decameron, vi. 10.

† Macchiavel.

To catch a thrush on every lime-twig there ;
Or in the wood among his wood-cutters ;
Or in the tavern by the highway-side
At tric-trac with the miller ; or at night,
Doffing his rustic suit, and, duly clad,
Entering his closet, and, among his books,
Among the great of every age and clime,
A numerous court, turning to whom he pleased,
Questioning each why he did this or that,
And learning how to overcome the fear
Of poverty and death ? — Nearer we hail
Thy sunny slope, Arcetri, sung of old
For its green wine ; dearer to me, to most,
As dwelt on by that great astronomer,
Seven years a prisoner at the city-gate,
Let in but in his grave-clothes. Sacred be
His villa (justly was it called the Gem !)
Sacred the lawn, where many a cypress threw
Its length of shadow, while he watched the stars !
Sacred the vineyard, where, while yet his sight
Glimmered, at blush of morn he dressed his vines,
Chanting aloud in gaiety of heart
Some verse of Ariosto. There, unseen,
In manly beauty Milton stood before him,

Gazing with reverend awe—Milton, his guest,
Just then come forth, all life and enterprise ;
He in his old age and extremity,
Blind, at noon-day exploring with his staff ;
His eyes upturned as to the golden sun,
His eye-balls idly rolling. Little then
Did Galileo think whom he received ;
That in his hand he held the hand of one
Who could requite him—who would spread his
name

O'er lands and seas—great as himself, nay greater ;
Milton as little that in him he saw,
As in a glass, what he himself should be,
Destined so soon to fall on evil days
And evil tongues—so soon, alas, to live
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude.

Well pleased, could we pursue
The Arno, from his birth-place in the clouds,
So near the yellow Tiber's—springing up
From his four fountains on the Appenine,
That mountain-ridge a sea-mark to the ships
Sailing on either sea. Downward he runs,
Scattering fresh verdure thro' the desolate wild,

Down by the City of Hermits,* and the woods
That only echo to the choral hymn ;
Then through these gardens to the Tuscan sea,
Reflecting castles, convents, villages,
And those great rivals in an elder day,
Florence and Pisa, who have given him fame,
Fame everlasting, but who stained so oft
His troubled waters. Oft, alas, were seen,
When flight, pursuit, and hideous rout were there,
Hands, clad in gloves of steel, held up imploring ;
The man, the hero, on his foaming steed
Borne underneath, already in the realms
Of darkness.—Nor did night or burning noon
Bring respite. Oft, as that great artist saw,†
Whose pencil had a voice, the cry “ To arms ! ”
And the shrill trumpet, hurried up the bank
Those who had stolen an hour to breast the tide,
And wash from their unharnessed limbs the blood
And sweat of battle. Sudden was the rush,‡
Violent the tumult ; for, already in sight,
Nearer and nearer yet the danger drew ;
Each every sinew straining, every nerve,

* Il Sagro Eremo.

† Michael Angelo.

‡ A description of the Cartoon of Pisa.

Each snatching up, and girding, buckling on
Morion and greave and shirt of twisted mail;
As for his life—no more perchance to taste,
Arno, the grateful freshness of thy glades,
Thy waters—where, exulting, he had felt
A swimmer's transport, there, alas, to float
And welter.

Nor between the gusts of war,
When flocks were feeding, and the shepherd's pipe
Gladdened the valley, when, but not unarmed,
The sower came forth, and following him that
ploughed,
Threw in the seed—did thy indignant waves
Escape pollution. Sullen was the splash,
Heavy and swift the plunge, when they received
The key that just had grated on the ear
Of Ugolino, ever closing up
That dismal dungeon henceforth to be named
The Tower of Famine. Once, indeed, 'twas thine,
When many a winter-flood, thy tributary,
Was thro' its rocky glen rushing, resounding,
And thou wert in thy might, to save, restore
A charge most precious. To the nearest ford,
Hastening, a horseman from Arezzo came,

Careless, impatient of delay, a babe
Slung in a basket to the knotty staff
That lay athwart his saddle-bow. He spurs,
He enters ; and his horse alarmed, perplexed,
Halts in the midst. Great is the stir, the strife ;
And lo, an atom on that dangerous sea,
The babe is floating ! Fast and far he flies ;
Now tempest-rocked, now whirling round and
round,
But not to perish. By thy willing waves
Borne to the shore, among the bulrushes
The ark has rested ; and unhurt, secure,
As on his mother's breast, he sleeps within,
All peace ! or never had the nations heard
That voice so sweet, which still enchanteth, inspirereth ;
That voice, which sung of love, of liberty.
Petrarch lay there ! And such the images
That here spring up for ever, in the young
Kindling poetic fire ! Such they that came
And clustered round our Milton, when at eve
Reclined beside thee, Arno ; when at eve,
Led on by thee, he wandered with delight,
Framing Ovidian verse, and thro' thy groves
Gathering wild myrtle. Such the poet's dreams ;

Yet not such only. For look round and say,
Where is the ground that did not drink warm
blood,
The echo that had learned not to articulate
The cry of murder ? Fatal was the day*
To Florence, when ('twas in a narrow street
North of that temple, where the truly great
Sleep, not unhonoured, not unvisited ;
That temple sacred to the Holy Cross—
There is the house—that house of the Donati,
Towerless, and left long since, but to the last
Braving assault—all rugged, all embossed
Below, and still distinguished by the rings
Of brass, that held in war and festival-time
Their family standards) fatal was the day
To Florence, when, at morn, at the ninth hour,
A noble dame in weeds of widowhood,
Weeds by so many to be worn so soon,
Stood at her door ; and, like a sorceress, flung
Her dazzling spell.

Subtle she was, and rich,
Rich in a hidden pearl of heavenly light,
Her daughter's beauty ; and too well she knew

* See Note.

Its virtue ! Patiently she stood and watched ;
Nor stood alone—but spoke not. In her breast
Her purpose lay ; and, as a youth passed by,
Clad for the nuptial rite, she smiled and said,
Lifting a corner of the maiden's veil,
“ This had I treasured up in secret for thee.
This hast thou lost ! ” He gazed and was undone !
Forgetting—not forgot—he broke the bond,
And paid the penalty, losing his life
At the bridge-foot ; and hence a world of woe !
Vengeance for vengeance crying, blood for blood ;
No intermission ! Law, that slumbers not,
And, like the angel with the flaming sword,
Sits over all, at once chastising, healing,
Himself the avenger, went ; and every street
Ran red with mutual slaughter—though sometimes
The young forgot the lesson they had learnt,
And loved when they should hate—like thee,

Imelda,

Thee and thy Paolo. When last ye met
In that still hour (the heat, the glare was gone,
Not so the splendour—through the cedar-grove
A radiance streamed like a consuming fire,
As though the glorious orb, in its descent,

Had come and rested there) when last ye met,
And those relentless brothers dragged him forth,
It had been well, hadst thou slept on, Imelda,
Nor from thy trance of fear awaked, as night
Fell on that fatal spot, to wish thee dead,
To track him by his blood, to search, to find,
Then fling thee down to catch a word, a look,
A sigh, if yet thou couldst (alas, thou couldst not)
And die, unseen, unthought of—from the wound
Sucking the poison.*—Yet, when slavery came,
Worse followed. Genius, valour left the land,
Indignant—all that had from age to age
Adorned, ennobled ; and headlong they fell,
Tyrant and slave. For deeds of violence,
Done in broad day, and more than half redeemed
By many a great and generous sacrifice
Of self to others, came the unpledged bowl,
The stab of the stiletto. Gliding by
Unnoticed, in slouched hat and muffling cloak,
That just discovered, Caravaggio-like,
A swarthy cheek, black brow, and eye of flame,
The bravo stole, and o'er the shoulder plunged
To the heart's core, or from beneath the ribs

* See Note.

Slanting (a surer path, as some averred)
Struck upward—then slunk off, or, if pursued,
Made for the sanctuary, and there along
The glimmering aisle among the worshippers
Wandered with restless step and jealous look,
Dropping thick blood. Misnamed to lull alarm,
In every palace was the laboratory,
Where he within brewed poisons swift and slow,
That scatter'd terror 'til all things seem'd poisonous,
And brave men trembled if a hand held out
A nosegay or a letter; while the great
Drank only from the Venice-glass, that broke,
That shivered, scattering round it as in scorn,
If aught malignant, aught of thine was there,
Cruel Tophana; and pawned provinces
For that miraculous gem, the gem that gave
A sign infallible of coming ill,
That clouded though the vehicle of death
Were an invisible perfume. Happy then
The guest to whom at sleeping-time 'twas said,
But in an under voice (a lady's page
Speaks in no louder) "Pass not on. That door
Leads to another which awaits thy coming,
One in the floor—now left, alas, unlocked.

No eye detects it—lying under foot,
 Just as thou enterest, at the threshold-stone ;
 Ready to fall and plunge thee into night
 And long oblivion !”—In that evil hour
 Where lurked not danger ? Thro’ the fairy-land,
 No seat of pleasure glittering half-way down,
 No hunting place—but with some damning spot
 That will not be washed out ! There, at Caiano,
 Where, when the hawks were mewed and evening
 came,

Pulci would set the table in a roar
 With his wild lay—there, where the sun descends,
 And hill and dale are lost, veiled with his beams,
 The fair Venitian* died, she and her lord—
 Died of a posset drugged by him who sat
 And saw them suffer, flinging back the charge ;
 The murderer on the murdered. Sobs of grief,†
 Sounds inarticulate—suddenly stopt,
 And followed by a struggle and a gasp,
 A gasp in death, are heard yet in Cerreto,
 Along the marble halls and staircases,
 Nightly at twelve ; and, at the self-same hour,
 Shrieks, such as penetrate the inmost soul,

* Bianca Capello.

† See Note.

Such as awake the innocent babe to long,
Long wailing, echo through the emptiness
Of that old den far up among the hills,
Frowning on him who comes from Pietra-Mala :
In them, alas, within five days and less,
Two unsuspecting victims, passing fair,
Welcomed with kisses, and slain cruelly,
One with the knife, one with the fatal noose.

But lo, the sun is setting ; earth and sky
One blaze of glory—What we saw but now,
As though it were not, though it had not been !
He lingers yet ; and, lessening to a point,
Shines like the eye of Heaven—then withdraws ;
And from the zenith to the utmost skirts
All is celestial red ! The hour is come,
When they that sail along the distant seas,
Languish for home ; and they that in the morn
Said to sweet friends “farewell,” melt as at parting ;
When, just gone forth, the pilgrim, if he hears,
As now we hear it—echoing round the hill
The bell that seems to mourn the dying day,
Slackens his pace and sighs, and those he loved
Loves more than ever. But who feels it not ?
And well may we, for we are far away.

THE PILGRIM.

It was an hour of universal joy.

The lark was up and at the gate of heaven,
Singing, as sure to enter when he came ;
The butterfly was basking in my path,
His radiant wings unfolded. From below
The bell of prayer rose slowly, plaintively ;
And odours, such as welcome in the day,
Such as salute the early traveller,
And come and go, each sweeter than the last,
Were rising. Hill and valley breathed delight ;
And not a living thing but blessed the hour !
In every bush and brake there was a voice
Responsive !—From the Thrasymene, that now
Slept in the sun, a lake of molten gold,
And from the shore that once, when armies met,
Rocked to and fro unfelt, so terrible
The rage, the slaughter, I had turned away ;
The path, that led me, leading through a wood,



A fairy-wilderness of fruits and flowers,
And by a brook that, in the day of strife,
Ran blood, but now runs amber—when a glade,
Far, far within, sunned only at noon-day,
Suddenly opened. Many a bench was there,
Each round its ancient elm ; and many a track,
Well known to them that from the highway loved
Awhile to deviate. In the midst a cross
Of mouldering stone as in a temple stood,
Solemn, severe ; coeval with the trees
That round it in majestic order rose ;
And on the lowest step a Pilgrim knelt,
In fervent prayer. He was the first I saw,
(Save in the tumult of a midnight-masque,
A revel where none cares to play his part,
And they, that speak, at once dissolve the charm)
The first in sober truth, no counterfeit ;
And, when his orisons were duly paid,
He rose, and we exchanged, as all are wont,
A traveller's greeting.—Young, and of an age
When youth is most attractive, when a light
Plays round and round, reflected, while it lasts,
From some attendant spirit, that ere long
(His charge relinquished with a sigh, a tear)

Wings his flight upward—with a look he won
My favour ; and, the spell of silence broke,
I could not but continue—“ Whence,” I asked,
“ Whence art thou ?”—“ From Mont’alto,” he
replied,

“ My native village in the Apennines.”—

“ And whither journeying ?”—“ To the holy
shrine

Of Saint Antonio in the city of Padua.

Perhaps, if thou hast ever gone so far,

Thou wilt direct my course.” “ Most willingly ;

But thou hast much to do, much to endure,

Ere thou hast entered where the silver lamps

Burn ever. Tell me—I would not transgress,

Yet ask I must—what could have brought thee
forth,

Nothing in act or thought to be atoned for ?”

“ It was a vow I made in my distress.

We were so blest, none were so blest as we,

Till sickness came. First, as death-struck, I fell ;

Then my beloved sister ; and ere long,

Worn with continual watchings, night and day,

Our saint-like mother. Worse and worse she grew ;

And in my anguish, my despair, I vowed,

That if she lived, if Heaven restored her to us,
I would forthwith, and in a pilgrim's weeds,
Visit that holy shrine. My vow was heard ;
And therefore am I come." "Thou hast done right ;
And may those weeds, so reverenced of old,
Guard thee in danger!" "They are nothing worth.
But they are worn in humble confidence ;
Nor would I for the richest robe resign them,
Wrought, as they were, by those I love so well,
Lauretta and my sister ; theirs the task,
But none to them, a pleasure, a delight,
To ply their utmost skill, and send me forth
As best became this service. Their last words,
' Fare thee well, Carlo. We shall count the hours !'
Will not go from me." " Health and strength be
thine

In thy long travel ! May no sunbeam strike ;
No vapour cling and wither ! May'st thou be,
Sleeping, or waking, sacred and secure !
And, when again thou com'st, thy labour done,
Joy be among ye ! In that happy hour
All will pour forth to bid thee welcome, Carlo ;
And there is one, or I am much deceived,
One thou hast named, who will not be the last."

“ Oh, she is true as truth itself can be !
But, ah, thou know’st her not. Would that thou
couldst !
My steps I quicken when I think of her ;
For, though they take me further from her door,
I shall return the sooner.”



AN INTERVIEW.

Pleasure, that comes unlooked-for, is thrice welcome ;

And, if it stir the heart, if aught be there,
That may hereafter in a thoughtful hour
Wake but a sigh, 'tis treasured up among
The things most precious ; and the day it came,
Is noted as a white day in our lives.

The sun was wheeling westward, and the cliffs
And nodding woods, that everlastingly
(Such the dominion of thy mighty voice,
Thy voice, Velino, uttered in the mist)
Hear thee and answer thee, were left at length
For others still as noon ; and on we strayed
From wild to wilder, nothing hospitable
Seen up or down, no bush or green or dry,
That ancient symbol at the cottage-door,
Offering refreshment—when Luigi cried,
“ Well, of a thousand tracks we chose the best ! ”
And, turning round an oak, oracular once,

Now lightning-struck, a cave, a thoroughfare
For all that came, each entrance a broad arch,
Whence many a deer, rustling his velvet coat,
Had issued, many a gipsy and her brood
Peered forth, then housed again—the floor yet grey
With ashes, and the sides, where roughest, hung
Loosely with locks of hair—I looked and saw
What, seen in such an hour by Sancho Panza,
Had given his honest countenance a breadth,
His cheeks a flush of pleasure and surprise,
Unknown before, had chained him to the spot,
And thou, Sir Knight, hadst traversed hill and dale,
Squire-less. Below and winding far away,
A narrow glade unfolded, such as spring
Broiders with flowers, and, when the moon is high,
The hare delights to race in, scattering round
The silvery dews. Cedar and cypress threw
Singly their depth of shadow, checkering
The greensward, and, what grew in frequent tufts,
An underwood of myrtle, that by fits
Sent up a gale of fragrance. Through the midst,
Reflecting, as it ran, purple and gold,
A rainbow's splendour (somewhere in the east
Rain-drops were falling fast) a rivulet

Sported as loth to go ; and on the bank
Stood (in the eyes of one, if not of both,
Worth all the rest and more) a sumpter-mule
Well-laden, while two menials as in haste
Drew from his ample panniers, ranging round
Viands and fruits on many a shining salver,
And plunging in the cool translucent wave
Flasks of delicious wine.—Anon a horn
Blew, through the champain bidding to the feast,
Its jocund note to other ears addressed,
Not ours ; and, slowly coming by a path,
That, ere it issued from an ilex-grove,
Was seen far inward, though along the glade
Distinguished only by a fresher verdure,
Peasants approached, one leading in a leash
Beagles yet panting, with various game,
In rich profusion slung, before, behind,
Leveret and quail and pheasant. All announced
The chase as over ; and ere long appeared,
Their horses full of fire, champing the curb
For the white foam was dry upon the flank,
Two in close converse, each in each delighting,
Their plumage waving as instinct with life ;
A lady young and graceful, and a youth,

Yet younger, bearing on a falconer's glove,
As in the golden, the romantic time,
His falcon hooded. Like some spirit of air,
Or fairy-vision, such as feigned of old,
The lady, while her courser pawed the ground,
Alighted ; and her beauty, as she trod
The enamelled bank, bruising nor herb nor flower,
That place illumined. Ah, who should she be,
And with her brother, as when last we met,
(When the first lark had sung ere half was said,
And as she stood, bidding adieu, her voice,
So sweet it was, recalled me like a spell)
Who but Angelica ?—That day we gave
To pleasure, and, unconscious of their flight,
Another and another ; hers a home
Dropt from the sky amid the wild and rude,
Loretto-like : where all was as a dream,
A dream spun out of some Arabian tale
Read or related in a roseate bower,
Some balmy eve. The rising moon we hailed,
Duly, devoutly, from a vestibule
Of many an arch, o'er-wrought and lavishly
With many a labyrinth of sylphs and flowers,
When Raphael and his school from Florence came,

Filling the land with splendour—nor less oft
Watched her, declining, from a silent dell,
Not silent once, what time in rivalry
Tasso, Guarini, waved their wizard-wands,
Peopling the groves from Arcady, and lo,
Fair forms appeared, murmuring melodious verse,
—Then, in their day, a sylvan theatre,
Mossy the seats, the stage a verdurous floor,
The scenery rock and shrub-wood, Nature's own ;
Nature the architect.

ROME.

I am in Rome ! Oft as the morning ray
Visits these eyes, waking at once I cry,
Whence this excess of joy ? What has befallen me ?
And from within a thrilling voice replies,
Thou art in Rome ! A thousand busy thoughts
Rush on my mind, a thousand images ;
And I spring up as girt to run a race !

Thou art in Rome ! the city that so long
Reigned absolute, the mistress of the world ;
The mighty vision that the prophets saw,
And trembled ; that from nothing, from the least,
The lowliest village (what but here and there
A reed-roofed cabin by a river side ?)
Grew into every thing ; and, year by year,
Patiently, fearlessly, working her way
O'er brook and field, o'er continent and sea,
Not like the merchant with his merchandize,
Or traveller with staff and scrip exploring,
But hand to hand, and foot to foot, through hosts,

Through nations numberless in battle array,
Each behind each, each, when the other fell,
Up and in arms, at length subdued them all.

Thou art in Rome ! the city where the Gauls,
Entering at sun-rise through her open gates,
And, through her streets silent and desolate,
Marching to slay, thought they saw Gods, not men ;
The city, that, by temperance, fortitude,
And love of glory, towered above the clouds,
Then fell—but, falling, kept the highest seat,
And in her loneliness, her pomp of woe,
Where now she dwells, withdrawn into the wild,
Still o'er the mind maintains, from age to age,
Her empire undiminished. There, as though
Grandeur attracted grandeur, are beheld
All things that strike, enoble—from the depths
Of Egypt, from the classic fields of Greece,
Her groves, her temples—all things that inspire
Wonder, delight ! Who would not say the forms
Most perfect, most divine, had by consent
Flocked thither to abide eternally,
Within those silent chambers where they dwell
In happy intercourse ?

And I am there !

Ah, little thought I, when in school I sate,
A school-boy on his bench, at early dawn
Glowing with Roman story, I should live
To tread the Appian, once an avenue
Of monuments most glorious, palaces,
Their doors sealed up and silent as the night,
The dwellings of the illustrious dead—to turn
Toward Tibur, and, beyond the city-gate,
Pour out my unpremeditated verse,
Where on his mule I might have met so oft
Horace himself—or climb the Palatine,
Dreaming of old Evander and his guest,
Dreaming and lost on that proud eminence,
Long while the seat of Rome, hereafter found
Less than enough (so monstrous was the brood
Engendered there, so Titan-like) to lodge
One in his madness ;* and inscribe my name,
My name and date, on some broad aloe-leaf,
That shoots and spreads within those very walls
Where Virgil read aloud his tale divine,
Where his voice faltered, and a mother wept
Tears of delight !

But what the narrow space

* Nero.

Just underneath? In many a heap the ground
Heaves, as though ruin in a frantic mood
Had done his utmost. Here and there appears,
As left to show his handy-work, not ours,
An idle column, a half-buried arch,
A wall of some great temple. It was once,
And long, the centre of their universe,
The Forum—whence a mandate, eagle-winged,
Went to the ends of the earth. Let us descend
Slowly. At every step much may be lost.
The very dust we tread stirs as with life;
And not a breath but from the ground sends up
Something of human grandeur.

We are come,
Are now where once the mightiest spirits met
In terrible conflict; this, while Rome was free,
The noblest theatre on this side Heaven!
Here the first Brutus stood, when o'er the corse
Of her so chaste all mourned, and from his cloud
Burst like a God. Here, holding up the knife
That ran with blood, the blood of his own child,
Virginius called down vengeance. But whence
spoke
They who harangued the people—turning now

To the twelve tables, now with lifted hands
 To the Capitoline Jove, whose fulgent shape
 In the unclouded azure shone far off,
 And to the shepherd on the Alban mount
 Seemed like a star new-risen ? Where were ranged
 In rough array as on their element,
 The beaks of those old gallies, destined still*
 To brave the brunt of war—at last to know
 A calm far worse, a silence as in death ?
 All spiritless ; from that disastrous hour
 When he, the bravest, gentlest of them all,†
 Scorning the chains he could not hope to break,
 Fell on his sword !

Along the Sacred Way

Hither the triumph came, and, winding round
 With acclamation, and the martial clang
 Of instruments, and cars laden with spoil,
 Stopt at the sacred stair that then appeared,
 Then through the darkness broke, ample, star-
 bright,

As though it led to heaven. 'Twas night ; but now
 A thousand torches, turning night to day,
 Blazed, and the victor, springing from his seat,

* The Rostra.

† Marcus Junius Brutus.

Went up, and, kneeling as in fervent prayer,
Entered the Capitol. But what are they.
Who at the foot withdraw, a mournful train
In fetters? And who, yet incredulous,
Now gazing wildly round, now on his sons,
On those so young, well pleased with all they see,
Staggers along, the last? They are the fallen,
Those who were spared to grace the chariot-wheels;
And there they parted, where the road divides,
The victor and the vanquished—there withdrew;
He to the festal board, and they to die.

Well might the great, the mighty of the world,
They who were wont to fare deliciously,
And war but for a kingdom more or less,
Shrink back, nor from their thrones endure to look,
To think that way! Well might they in their state
Humble themselves, and kneel and supplicate
To be delivered from a dream like this!

Here Cincinnatus passed, his plough the while
Left in the furrow; and how many more,
Whose laurels fade not, who still walk the earth,
Consuls, dictators, still in curule pomp
Sit and decide; and, as of old in Rome,
Name but their names, set every heart on fire!

Here, in his bonds, he whom the phalanx saved
not,*

The last on Philip's throne, and the Numidian,†
So soon to say, stript of his cumbrous robe,
Stript to the skin, and in his nakedness
Thrust underground, “How cold this bath of
yours!”

And thy proud queen, Palmyra, through the sands‡
Pursued, o'er taken on her dromedary ;
Whose temples, palaces, a wondrous dream
That passes not away, for many a league
Illumine yet the desert. Some invoked
Death, and escaped ; the Egyptian, when her asp
Came from his covert under the green leaf ;§
And Hannibal himself ; and she who said,
Taking the fatal cup between her hands,||
“ Tell him I would it had come yesterday ;
For then it had not been his nuptial gift.”

Now all is changed ; and here, as in the wild,
The day is silent, dreary as the night ;
None stirring, save the herdsman and his herd,

* Perseus.

§ Cleopatra.

† Jugurtha.

|| Sophonisba.

‡ Zenobia.

Savage alike ; or they that would explore,
Discuss, and learnedly ; or they that come,
(And there are many who have crossed the earth,)
That they may give the hours to meditation,
And wander, often saying to themselves,
“ This was the Roman Forum !”

A FUNERAL.

“ Whence this delay ?” “ Along the crowded street
A funeral comes, and with unusual pomp.”
So I withdrew a little, and stood still,
While it went by. “ She died as she deserved,”
Said an Abatè, gathering up his cloak,
And with a shrug retreating as the tide
Flowed more and more. “ But she was beautiful !”
Replied a soldier of the Pontiff’s guard.
“ And innocent as beautiful !” exclaimed
A matron sitting in her stall, hung round
With garlands, holy pictures, and what not.
Her Alban grapes and Tusculan figs displayed
In rich profusion. From her heart she spoke ;
And I accosted her to hear her story.
“ The stab,” she cried, “ was given in jealousy ;
But never fled a purer spirit to heaven,
As thou wilt say, or much my mind misleads,
When thou hast seen her face. Last night at dusk,
When on her way from vespers—none were near,

None save her serving-boy, who knelt and wept,
But what could tears avail him when she fell—
Last night at dusk, the clock then striking nine,
Just by the fountain—that before the church,
The church she always used, St. Isidore's—
Alas, I knew her from her earliest youth,
That excellent lady. Ever would she say,
Good even, as she passed, and with a voice
Gentle as theirs in heaven !” But now by fits
A dull and dismal noise assailed the ear,
A wail, a chant, louder and louder yet ;
And now a strange fantastic troop appeared !
Thronging they came, as from the shades below ;
All of a ghostly white ! “ Oh say,” I cried,
“ Do not the living here bury the dead ?
Do spirits come and fetch them ? What are these,
That seem not of this world, and mock the day ;
Each with a burning taper in his hand ?”
“ It is an ancient brotherhood thou seest :
Such their apparel. Through the long, long line,
Look where thou wilt, no likeness of a man ;
The living masked, the dead alone uncovered.
But mark”—And, lying on her funeral-couch,
Like one asleep, her eyes closed, her hands

Folded together on her modest breast,
As 'twere her nightly posture, through the crowd
She came at last—and richly, gaily clad,
As for a birth-day feast ! But breathes she not ?
A glow is on her cheek—and her lips move !
And now a smile is there—how heavenly sweet !
“ Oh no !” replied the dame, wiping her tears,
But with an accent less of grief than anger,
“ No, she will never, never wake again ! ”

Death, when we meet the spectre in our walks,
As we did yesterday and shall to-morrow,
Soon grows familiar, like most other things,
Seen, not observed ; but in a foreign clime,
Changing his shape to something new and strange,
(And through the world he changes as in sport,
Affect he greatness or humility,))
Knocks at the heart. His form and fashion here
To me, I do confess, reflect a gloom,
A sadness round ; yet one I would not lose ;
Being in unison with all things else
In this, this land of shadows, where we live
More in past time than present, where the ground,
League beyond league, like one great cemetery,
Is covered o'er with mouldering monuments ;

And, let the living wander where they will,
They cannot leave the footsteps of the dead.

Oft, where the burial-rite follows so fast
The agony, oft coming, nor from far,
Must a fond father meet his darling child,
(Him who at parting climbed his knees and clung,)
Clay-cold and wan, and to the bearers cry,
“Stand, I conjure ye !”

Seen thus destitute,
What are the greatest ? They must speak beyond
A thousand homilies. When Raphael went,
His heavenly face the mirror of his mind,
His mind a temple for all lovely things
To flock to and inhabit—when he went,
Wrapt in his sable cloak, the cloak he wore,
To sleep beneath the venerable dome,*
By those attended, who in life had loved,
Had worshipped, following in his steps to fame,
(‘Twas on an April day, when nature smiles,)
All Rome was there. But, ere the march began,
Ere to receive their charge the bearers came,
Who had not sought him ? And when all beheld
Him, where he lay, how changed from yesterday !

* The Pantheon.

Him in that hour cut off, and at his head
His last great work ; when, entering in, they looked
Now on the dead, then on that master-piece,
Now on his face, lifeless and colourless,
Then on those forms divine that lived and breathed,
And would live on for ages—all were moved ;
And sighs burst forth, and loudest lamentations.

NATIONAL PREJUDICES.

"Another assassination ! This venerable city," I exclaimed, "what is it, but as it began, a nest of robbers and murderers ? We must away at sun-rise, Luigi."—But before sun-rise I had reflected a little, and in the soberest prose. My indignation was gone ; and, when Luigi undrew my curtain, crying, "Up, signor, up ! The horses are at the door." "Luigi," I replied, "if thou lovest me, draw the curtain."*

It would lessen very much the severity with which men judge of each other, if they would but trace effects to their causes, and observe the progress of things in the moral as accurately as in the physical world. When we condemn millions in the mass as vindictive and sanguinary, we should remember that, wherever justice is ill-administered, the injured will redress themselves. Robbery provokes to robbery ; murder to assassination. Re-

*A dialogue, which is said to have passed many years ago at Lyons, (Mem. de Grammont, I. 3.) and which may still be heard in almost every hotellerie at day-break.

sentments become hereditary; and what began in disorder, ends as if all hell had broke loose.

Laws create a habit of self-constraint, not only by the influence of fear, but by regulating in its exercise the passion of revenge. If they overawe the bad by the prospect of a punishment certain and well-defined, they console the injured by the infliction of that punishment; and, as the infliction is a public act, it excites and entails no enmity. The laws are offended; and the community for its own sake pursues and overtakes the offender; often without the concurrence of the sufferer, sometimes against his wishes.

Now those who were not born, like ourselves, to such advantages, we should surely rather pity than hate; and, when at length they venture to turn against their rulers,* we should lament, not wonder at their excesses; remembering that nations are naturally patient and long suffering, and seldom rise in rebellion till they are so degraded by a bad

*As the descendants of an illustrious people have lately done. Can it be believed that there are many among us, who, from a desire to be thought superior to common-place sentiments and vulgar feelings, affect an indifference to their cause? "If the Greeks," they say, "had the probity of other nations—but they are false to a proverb!" And is not falsehood the characteristic of slaves? Man is the creature of circumstances. Free he has the qualities of a freeman; enslaved those of a slave.

government as to be almost incapable of a good one.

“Hate them, perhaps,” you may say, “we should not; but despise them we must, if enslaved, like the people of Rome, in mind as well as body; if their religion be a gross and barbarous superstition,” —I respect knowledge; but I do not despise ignorance. They think only as their fathers thought, worship as they worshipped. They do no more; and, if ours had not burst their bondage, braving imprisonment and death, might not we at this very moment have been exhibiting, in our streets and our churches, the same processions, ceremonials, and mortifications?

Nor should we require from those who are in an earlier stage of society, what belongs to a later. They are only where we once were; and why hold them in derision? It is their business to cultivate the inferior arts before they think of the more refined; and in many of the last what are we as a nation, when compared to others that have passed away? Unfortunately it is too much the practice of governments to nurse and keep alive in the governed their national prejudices. It withdraws their attention from what is passing at home, and makes them better tools in the hands of ambition. Hence

next-door neighbours are held up to us from our childhood as *natural enemies*; and we are urged on like curs to worry each other.*

In like manner we should learn to be just to individuals. Who can say, “In such circumstances I should have done otherwise?” Who, did he but reflect by what slow gradations, often by how many strange concurrences, we are led astray; with how much reluctance, how much agony, how many efforts to escape, how many self-accusations, how many sighs, how many tears—Who did he but reflect for a moment, would have the heart to cast a stone? Fortunately these things are known to Him, from whom no secrets are hidden; and let us rest in the assurance that his judgments are not as ours are.

* Candour, generosity, how rare are they in the world; and how much is to be deplored the want of them! When a minister in our parliament consents at last to a measure which, for many reasons perhaps existing no longer, he had before refused to adopt, there should be no exultation as over the fallen, no taunt, no jeer. How often may the resistance be continued lest an enemy should triumph, and the result of conviction be received as a symptom of fear.

THE CAMPAGNA OF ROME.

Have none appeared as tillers of the ground,
None since they went, as though it still were theirs,
And they might come and claim their own again ?
Was the last plough a Roman's ? From this seat,*
Sacred for ages, whence, as Virgil sings,
The Queen of Heaven, alighting from the sky,
Looked down and saw the armies in array,†
Let us contemplate ; and, where dreams from Jove
Descended on the sleeper, where perhaps
Some inspirations may be lingering still,
Some glimmerings of the future or the past,
Let us await their influence ; silently
Revolving, as we rest on the green turf,
The changes from that hour, when he from Troy
Went up the Tiber ; when resplendent shields,
No strangers to the iron hail of war,
Streamed far and wide, and dashing oars were heard
Among those woods where Silvia's stag was lying,

* See Note.

† Æneid, xii. 134.

His antlers gay with flowers ; among those woods
 Where, by the moon that saw and yet withdrew not,
 Two were so soon to wander and be slain,
 Two lovely in their lives, nor in their death
 Divided.

Then, and hence to be discerned,
 How many realms, pastoral and warlike, lay
 Along this plain, each with its schemes of power,
 Its little rivalships ! What various turns
 Of fortune there ! what moving accidents
 From ambuscade and open violence !
 Mingling, the sounds came up ; and hence how oft
 We might have caught among the trees below,
 Glittering with helm and shield, the men of Tibur ;*
 Or in Greek vesture, Greek their origin,
 Some embassy ascending to Præneste ;†
 How oft descried, without thy gates, Aricia,‡
 Entering the solemn grove for sacrifice,
 Senate and people !—Each a busy hive,
 Glowing with life !

But all ere long are lost
 In one. We look, and where the river rolls
 Southward its shining labyrinth, in her strength

* Tivoli.

† Palestrina.

‡ La Riccia.

A city, girt with battlements and towers,
On seven small hills is rising. Round about,
At rural work the citizens are seen,
None unemployed ; the noblest of them all
Binding their sheaves or on their threshing-floors,
As though they had not conquered. Every where
Some trace of valour or heroic toil !

Here is the sacred field of the Horatii.

There are the Quintian meadows. Here the hill*
How holy, where a generous people, twice,
Twice going forth, in terrible anger sate
Armed ; and, their wrongs redressed, at once gave
way,

Helmet and shield, and sword and spear thrown
down,

And every hand uplifted, every heart.

Poured out in thanks to heaven.

Once again

We look ; and lo, the sea is white with sails
Innumerable, wafting to the shore
Treasures untold ; the vale, the promontories,
A dream of glory ; temples, palaces,
Called up as by enchantment ; aqueducts

* Mons Sacer.

Among the groves and glades rolling along
Rivers, on many an arch high over-head ;
And in the centre, like a burning sun,
The imperial city ! They have now subdued
All nations. But where they who led them forth—
Who, when at length released by victory,
(Buckler and spear hung up—but not to rust,)—
Held poverty no evil, no reproach,
Living on little with a cheerful mind,—
The Decii, the Fabricii ? Where the spade,
And reaping hook, among their household things
Duly transmitted ? In the hands of men
Made captive ; while the master and his guests,
Reclining, quaff in gold, and roses swim,
Summer and winter, through the circling year,
On their Falernian—in the hands of men
Dragged into slavery, with how many more
Spared but to die, a public spectacle,
In combat with each other, and required
To fall with grace, with dignity—to sink,
While life is gushing, and the plaudits ring
Faint and yet fainter on their failing ear,
As models for the sculptor.—But their days,
Their hours are numbered. Hark, a yell, a shriek,

A barbarous outcry, loud and louder yet,
That echoes from the mountains to the sea !
And mark, beneath us, like a bursting cloud,
The battle moving onward ! Had they slain
All, that the earth should from her womb bring forth
New nations to destroy them ? From the depth
Of forests, from what none had dared explore,
Regions of thrilling ice, as though in ice
Engendered, multiplied, they pour along,
Shaggy and huge ! Host after host, they come ;
The Goth, the Vandal ; and again the Goth !

Once more we look, and all is still as night,
All desolate ! Groves, temples, palaces,
Swept from the sight ; and nothing visible,
Amid the sulphurous vapours that exhale
As from a land accurst, save here and there
An empty tomb, a fragment like the limb
Of some dismembered giant. In the midst
A city stands, her domes and turrets crowned
With many a cross ; but they that issue forth
Wander like strangers who had built among
The mighty ruins, silent, spiritless ;
And on the road, where once we might have met
Cæsar and Cato, and men more than kings,
We meet, none else, the pilgrim and the beggar.

THE ROMAN PONTIFFS.

Those ancient men, what were they, who achieved
A sway beyond the greatest conquerors ;
Setting their feet upon the necks of kings,
And, through the world, subduing, chaining down
The free, immortal spirit ? Were they not
Mighty magicians ? Theirs a wondrous spell,
Where true and false were with infernal art
Close interwoven ; where together met
Blessings and curses, threats and promises ;
And with the terrors of futurity
Mingled whate'er enchantments and fascinates,
Music and painting, sculpture, rhetoric,
And dazzling light and darkness visible,
And architectural pomp, such as none else !
What in his day the Syracusan sought,
Another world to plant his engines on,
They had ; and, having it, like gods, not men,
Moved this world at their pleasure. Ere they came,
Their shadows, stretching far and wide, were
known ;

And two, that looked beyond the visible sphere,
Gave notice of their coming—he who saw
The Apocalypse ; and he of elder time,
Who in an awful vision of the night
Saw the four kingdoms. Distant as they were,
Those holy men, well might they faint with fear !

CAIUS CESTIUS.

When I am inclined to be serious I love to wander up and down before the tomb of Caius Cestius. The protestant burial ground is there ; and most of the little monuments are erected to the young—young men of promise, cut off when on their travels, full of enthusiasm, full of enjoyment ; brides, in the bloom of their beauty, on their first journey ; or children borne from home in search of health. This stone was placed by his fellow travellers, young as himself, who will return to the house of his parents without him ; that, by a husband or a father, now in his native country. His heart is buried in that grave.

It is a quiet and sheltered nook, covered in the winter with violets ; and the pyramid, that overshadows it, gives it a classical and singularly solemn air. You feel an interest there, a sympathy you were not prepared for. You are yourself in a foreign land, and they are, for the most part, your countrymen. They call upon you in your mother tongue—in English—in words unknown to a native,

known only to yourselves: and the tomb of Cestius, that old majestic pile, has this also in common with them. It is itself a stranger among strangers. It has stood there till the language spoken round about it has changed; and the shepherd, born at the foot, can read its inscription no longer.

THE NUN.

'Tis over ; and her lovely cheek is now
On her hard pillow—there, alas, to be
Nightly, through many and many a dreary hour,
Wan, often wet with tears, and (ere at length
Her place is empty, and another comes)
In anguish, in the ghastliness of death ;
Hers never more to leave those mournful walls,
Even on her bier.

'Tis over ; and the rite,
With all its pomp and harmony, is now
Floating before her. She arose at home,
To be the show, the idol of the day ;
Her vesture gorgeous, and her starry head—
No rocket, bursting in the midnight-sky,
So dazzling. When to-morrow she awakes,
She will awake as though she still was there,
Still in her father's house ; and lo, a cell
Narrow and dark, nought through the gloom dis-
cerned,

Nought save the crucifix, the rosary,
And the gray habit lying by to shroud
Her beauty and grace.

When on her knees she fell,
Entering the solemn place of consecration,
And from the latticed gallery came a chant
Of psalms, most saint-like, most angelical,
Verse after verse sung out how holily,
The strain returning, and still, still returning,
Methought it acted like a spell upon her,
And she was casting off her earthly dross ;
Yet was it sad as sweet, and, ere it closed,
Came like a dirge. When her fair head was shorn,
And the long tresses in her hands were laid,
That she might fling them from her, saying,
“ Thus,

Thus I renounce the world and worldly things !”
When, as she stood, her bridal ornaments
Were, one by one, removed, even to the last,
That she might say, flinging them from her, “ Thus,
Thus I renounce the world !” when all was changed,
And, as a nun, in homeliest guise she knelt,
Veiled in her veil, crowned with her silver crown,
Her crown of lilies as the spouse of Christ,

Well might her strength forsake her, and her knees
Fail in that hour ! Well might the holy man,
He, at whose feet she knelt, give as by stealth
('Twas in her utmost need ; nor, while she lives,
Will it go from her, fleeting as it was)
That faint but fatherly smile, that smile of love
And pity !

Like a dream the whole is fled ;
And they, that came in idleness to gaze
Upon the victim dressed for sacrifice,
Are mingling in the world ; thou in thy cell
Forgot, Teresa. Yet, among them all,
None were so formed to love and to be loved,
None to delight, adorn ; and on thee now
A curtain, blacker than the night, is dropped
For ever ! In thy gentle bosom sleep
Feelings, affections, destined now to die,
To wither like the blossom in the bud,
Those of a wife, a mother ; leaving there
A cheerless void, a chill as of the grave,
A languor and a lethargy of soul,
Death-like, and gathering more and more, till
Death
Comes to release thee. Ah, what now to thee,

What now to thee the treasure of thy youth ?
As nothing !

But thou canst not yet reflect
Calmly ; so many things, strange and perverse,
That meet, recoil, and go but to return,
The monstrous birth of one eventful day,
Troubling thy spirit—from the first, at dawn,
The rich arraying for the nuptial feast,
To the black pall, the requiem. All in turn
Revisit thee, and round thy lowly bed
Hover, uncalled. Thy young and innocent heart,
How is it beating ? Has it no regrets ?
Discoverest thou no weakness lurking there ?
But thine exhausted frame has sunk to rest.
Peace to thy slumbers !

THE FIRE-FLY.

There is an insect, that, when evening comes,
Small though he be and scarce distinguishable,
Like evening clad in soberest livery,
Unsheathes his wings, and thro' the woods and glades
Scatters a marvellous splendour. On he wheels,
Blazing by fits as from excess of joy,
Each gush of light a gush of ecstacy ;
Nor unaccompanied ; thousands that fling
A radiance all their own, not of the day,
Thousands as bright as he, from dusk till dawn,
Soaring, descending.

In the mother's lap

Well may the child put forth his little hands,
Singing the nursery-song he learned so soon ;
And the young nymph, preparing for the dance
By brook or fountain-side, in many a braid
Wreathing her golden hair, well may she cry,
“ Come hither ; and the shepherds, gathering round,
Shall say, Floretta emulates the night,

Spangling her head with stars." Oft have I met
This shining race, when in the Tuscan groves
My path no longer glimmered ; oft among
Those trees, religious once and always green,
That yet dream out their stories of old Rome
Over the Alban lake ; oft met and hailed,
Where the precipitate Anio thunders down,
And through the surging mist a poet's house
(So some aver, and who would not believe ?)
Reveals itself. Yet cannot I forget
Him, who rejoiced me in those walks at eve,*
My earliest, pleasantest, who dwells unseen,
And in our northern clime, when all is still,
Nightly keeps watch, nightly in bush or brake
His lonely lamp rekindling. Unlike theirs,
His, if less dazzling, through the darkness knows
No intermission ; sending forth its ray
Through the green leaves, a ray serene and clear
As virtue's own.

* The glow-worm.

FOREIGN TRAVEL.

It was in a splenetic humour that I sate me down to my scanty fare at Terracina ; and how long I should have contemplated the lean thrushes in array before me, I cannot say, if a cloud of smoke, that drew the tears into my eyes, had not burst from the green and leafy boughs on the hearth-stone. "Why," I exclaimed, starting up from the table, "why did I leave my own chimney-corner ?—But am I not on the road to Brundusium ? And are not these the very calamities that befel Horace and Virgil, and Mæcenas, and Plotius, and Varius ? Horace laughed at them—Then why should not I ? Horace resolved to turn them to account ; and Virgil—cannot we hear him observing, that to remember them will, by and by, be a pleasure?" My soliloquy reconciled me at once to my fate ; and when for the twentieth time, I had looked through the window on a sea sparkling with innumerable brilliants, a sea on which the heroes of the *Odyssey* and the *Eneid* had sailed, I sat down as to a splendid banquet. My thrushes had the flavour of

ortolans ; and I ate with an appetite I had not known before. "Who," I cried, as I poured out my last glass of Falernian,* (for Falernian it was said to be, and in my eyes it ran bright and clear as a topaz-stone,) "who would remain at home, could he do otherwise ? Who would submit to tread that dull, but daily round ; his hours forgotten as soon as spent ?" and, opening my journal-book and dipping my pen in my ink-horn, I determined, as far as I could, to justify myself and my countrymen in wandering over the face of the earth. "It may serve me," said I, "as a remedy in some future fit of the spleen."

Ours is a nation of travellers;† and no wonder, when the elements, air, water, fire, attend at our bidding to transport us from shore to shore ; when the ship rushes into the deep, her track the foam as of some mighty torrent ; and, in three hours or less,

* We were now within a few hours of the Campania Felix. On the colour and flavour of Falernian consult Galen and Dioscorides.

† As indeed it always was, contributing those of every degree, from a *milord* with his suite to him whose only attendant is his shadow. Coryate in 1608 performed his journey on foot ; and returning, hung up his shoes in his village-church as an ex-voto. Goldsmith, a century and a half afterwards, followed in nearly the same path ; playing a tune on his flute to procure admittance, whenever he approached a cottage at night-fall.

we stand gazing and gazed at among a foreign people. None want an excuse. If rich, they go to enjoy ; if poor, to retrench ; if sick, to recover ; if studious, to learn ; if learned, to relax from their studies. But whatever they may say, whatever they may believe, they go for the most part on the same errand ; nor will those who reflect, think that errand an idle one.

Almost all men are over-anxious. No sooner do they enter the world, than they lose that taste for natural and simple pleasures, so remarkable in early life. Every hour do they ask themselves what progress they have made in the pursuit of wealth or honour ; and on they go as their fathers went before them, till, weary and sick at heart, they look back with a sigh of regret to the golden time of their childhood.

Now travel, and foreign travel more particularly, restores to us in a great degree what we have lost. When the anchor is heaved, we double down the leaf ; and for a while at least all effort is over. The old cares are left clustering round the old objects ; and at every step, as we proceed, the slightest circumstance amuses and interests. All is new and strange. We surrender ourselves, and feel once again as children. Like them, we enjoy eagerly ;

like them when we fret, we fret only for the moment; and here indeed the resemblance is very remarkable, for, if a journey has its pains as well as its pleasures (and there is nothing unmixed in this world) the pains are no sooner over than they are forgotten, while the pleasures live long in the memory.

Nor is it surely without another advantage. If life be short, not so to many of us are its days and its hours. When the blood slumbers in the veins, how often do we wish that the earth would turn faster on its axis, that the sun would rise and set before it does ; and, to escape from the weight of time, how many follies, how many crimes are committed ! Men rush on danger, and even on death. Intrigue, play, foreign and domestic broil, such are their resources ; and, when these things fail, they destroy themselves.

Now in travelling we multiply events, and innocently. We set out, as it were, on our adventures ; and many are those that occur to us, morning, noon, and night. The day we come to a place which we have long heard and read of, and in Italy we do so continually, it is an era in our lives ; and from that moment the very name calls up a picture. How delightfully too does the knowledge flow in upon

us, and how fast!* Would he who sat in a corner of his library, poring over books and maps, learn more or so much in the time, as he who, with his eyes and his heart open, is receiving impressions all day long from the things themselves?† How accurately do they arrange themselves in our memory, towns, rivers, mountains; and in what living colours do we recall the dresses, manners, and customs of the people! Our sight is the noblest of all our senses. “It fills the mind with most ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues longest in action without being tired.” Our sight is on the alert when we travel; and its exercise is then so delightful, that we forget the profit in the pleasure.

Like a river, that gathers, that refines as it runs, like a spring that takes its course through some rich vein of mineral, we improve and imperceptibly—nor in the head only, but in the heart. Our prejudices leave us one by one. Seas and mountains are no longer our boundaries. We learn to love, and es-

* To judge at once of a nation, we have only to throw our eyes on the markets and the fields. If the markets are well supplied, the fields well cultivated, all is right. If otherwise, we may say, and say truly, these people are barbarous or oppressed.

† Assuredly not, if the last' has laid a proper foundation. Knowledge makes knowledge as money makes money, nor ever perhaps so fast as on a journey.

teem, and admire beyond them. Our benevolence extends itself with our knowledge. And must we not return better citizens than we went? For the more we become acquainted with the institutions of other countries, the more highly must we value our own.

I threw down my pen in triumph. "The question," said I, "is set to rest for ever. And yet—"

"And yet—" I must still say. The wisest of men seldom went out of the walls of Athens; and for that worst of evils, that sickness of the soul, to which we are most liable when most at our ease, is there not after all a surer and yet pleasanter remedy, a remedy for which we have only to cross the threshold? A Piedmontese nobleman, into whose company I fell at Turin, had not long before experienced its efficacy; and his story, which he told me without reserve, was as follows.

"I was weary of life, and, after a day, such as few have known and none would wish to remember, was hurrying along the street to the river, when I felt a sudden check. I turned and beheld a little boy, who had caught the skirt of my cloak in his anxiety to solicit my notice. His look and manner were irresistible. Not less so was the lesson he

had learnt. ‘There are six of us; and we are dying for want of food?’—‘Why should I not,’ said I to myself, ‘relieve this wretched family? I have the means; and it will not delay me many minutes. But what, if it does?’ The scene of misery he conducted me to, I cannot describe. I threw them my purse; and their burst of gratitude overcame me. It filled my eyes—it went as a cordial to my heart. ‘I will call again to-morrow,’ I cried. Fool that I was, to think of leaving a world, where such pleasure was to be had, and so cheaply!”



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THE FOUNTAIN.

It was a well
Of whitest marble, white as from the quarry ;
And richly wrought with many a high relief,
Greek sculpture—in some earlier day perhaps
A tomb, and honoured with a hero's ashes.
The water from the rock filled, overflowed it ;
Then dashed away, playing the prodigal,
And soon was lost—stealing unseen, unheard,
Through the long grass, and round the twisted roots
Of aged trees ; discovering where it ran
By the fresh verdure. Overcome with heat,
I threw me down ; admiring, as I lay,
That shady nook, a singing-place for birds,
That grove so intricate, so full of flowers,
More than enough to please a child a-Maying.

The sun had set, a distant convent bell
Ringing the *Angelus* ; and now approached
The hour for stir and village gossip there,
The hour Rebekah came, when from the well

She drew with such alacrity to serve
The stranger and his camels. Soon I heard
Footsteps ; and lo, descending by a path
Trodden for ages, many a nymph appeared,
Appeared and vanished, bearing on her head
Her earthen pitcher. It called up the day
Ulysses landed there ; and long I gazed,
Like one awaking in a distant time.*

At length there came the loveliest of them all,
Her little brother dancing down before her ;
And ever as he spoke, which he did ever,
Turning and looking up in warmth of heart
And brotherly affection. Stopping there,
She joined her rosy hands, and, filling them
With the pure element, gave him to drink ;
And, while he quenched his thirst, standing on tiptoe,
Looked down upon him with a sister's smile,
Nor stirred till he had done, fixed as a statue.

Then hadst thou seen them as they stood, Canova,
Thou hadst endowed them with immortal youth ;
And they had evermore lived undivided,
Winning all hearts—of all thy works the fairest.

* The place here described is near Mola di Gaeta in the kingdom of Naples.

BANDITTI.

"Tis a wild life, fearful and full of change,
The mountain-robb'r's. On the watch he lies,
Levelling his carbine at the passenger ;
And, when his work is done, he dares not sleep.

Time was, the trade was nobler, if not honest ;
When they that robbed were men of better faith
Than kings or pontiffs ; when, such reverence
The poet drew among the woods and wilds,
A voice was heard, that never bade to spare,
Crying aloud, " Hence to the distant hills !
Tasso approaches ; he, whose song beguiles
The day of half its hours ; whose sorcery
Dazzles the sense, turning our forest-glades
To lists that blaze with gorgeous armoury,
Our mountain-caves to regal palaces.
Hence, nor descend till he and his are gone.
Let him fear nothing."

When along the shore,
And by the path that, wandering on its way,

Leads through the fatal grove where Tully fell,
(Gray and o'ergrown, an ancient tomb is there,) He came and they withdrew ; they were a race Careless of life in others and themselves, For they had learned their lesson in a camp ; But not ungenerous. 'Tis no longer so. Now crafty, cruel, torturing ere they slay The unhappy captive, and with bitter jests Mocking misfortune ; vain, fantastical, Wearing whatever glitters in the spoil ; And most devout, tho', when they kneel and pray, With every bead they could recount a murder, As by a spell they start up in array, As by a spell they vanish—theirs a band, Not as elsewhere of outlaws, but of such As sow and reap, and at the cottage door Sit to receive, return the traveller's greeting ; Now in the garb of peace, now silently Arming and issuing forth, led on by men Whose names on innocent lips are words of fear, Whose lives have long been forfeit. Some there are That, ere they rise to this bad eminence, Lurk, night and day, the plague-spot visible, The guilt that says, Beware ; and mark we now

Him, where he lies, who couches for his prey
At the bridge-foot in some dark cavity
Scooped by the waters, or some gaping tomb,
Nameless and tenantless, whence the red fox
Slunk as he entered. There he broods in spleen
Gnawing his beard ; his rough and sinewy frame
O'erwritten with the story of his life :
On his wan cheek a sabre-cut, well-earned
In foreign warfare ; on his breast the brand
Indelible, burnt in when to the port
He clanked his chain, among a hundred more
Dragged ignominiously ; on every limb
Memorials of his glory and his shame,
Stripes of the lash and honourable scars,
And channels here and there worn to the bone
By galling fetters. He comes slowly forth,
Unkennelling, and up that savage dell
Anxiously looks ; his cruise, an ample gourd,
(Duly replenished from the vintner's cask,)
Slung from his shoulder ; in his breadth of belt
Two pistols and a dagger yet uncleansed,
A parchment scrawled with uncouth characters,
And a small vial, his last remedy,
His cure, when all things fail. No noise is heard,

Save when the rugged bear and the gaunt wolf
Howl in the upper region, or a fish
Leaps in the gulf beneath.—But now he kneels,
And, like a scout when listening to the tramp
Of horse or foot, lays his experienced ear
Close to the ground, then rises and explores,
Then kneels again, and, his short rifle-gun
Against his cheek, waits patiently.—Two monks,
Portly, grey-headed, on their gallant steeds,
Descend where yet a mouldering cross o'erhangs
The grave of one that from the precipice
Fell in an evil hour. Their bridle-bells
Ring merrily ; and many a loud, long laugh
Re-echoes ; but at once the sounds are lost.
Unconscious of the good in store below,
The holy fathers have turned off, and now
Cross the brown heath, ere long to wag their beards
Before my lady abbess, and discuss
Things only known to the devout and pure
O'er her spiced bowl—then shrive the sisterhood,
Sitting by turns with an inclining ear
In the confessional.—He moves his lips
As with a curse—then paces up and down,
Now fast, now slow, brooding and muttering on ;

Gloomy alike to him the past, the future.

But hark, the nimble tread of numerous feet !

—'Tis but a dappled herd, come down to slake
Their thirst in the cool wave. He turns and aims ;
Then checks himself, unwilling to disturb
The sleeping echoes. Once again he earths ;
Slipping away to house with them beneath,
His old companions in that hiding place,
The bat, the toad, the blind-worm, and the newt ;
And hark, a footstep, firm and confident,
As of a man in haste. Nearer it draws ;
And now is at the entrance of the den.

Ha ! 'tis a comrade, sent to gather in
The band for some great enterprise. Who wants
A sequel may read on. The unvarnished tale
That follows, will supply the place of one.
'Twas told me by the Count St. Angelo,
When in a blustering night he sheltered me
In that brave castle of his ancestors
O'er Garigliano, and is such indeed
As every day brings with it—in a land
Where laws are trampled on, and lawless men
Walk in the sun ; but it should not be lost,
For it may serve to bind us to our country.

AN ADVENTURE.

Three days they lay in ambush at my gate,
Then sprung and led me captive. Many a wild
We traversed ; but Rusconi, 'twas no less,
Marched by my side, and, when I thirsted, climbed
The cliffs for water ; though, whene'er he spoke,
'Twas briefly, sullenly ; and on he led,
Distinguished only by an amulet,
That in a golden chain hung from his neck,
A crystal of rare virtue. Night fell fast,
When on a heath, black and immeasurable,
He turned and bade them halt. 'Twas where the
earth

Heaves o'er the dead—where erst some Alaric
Fought his last fight, and every warrior threw
A stone to tell for ages where he lay.

Then all advanced, and, ranging in a square,
Stretched forth their arms as on the holy cross,
From each to each their sable cloaks extending,
That, like the solemn hangings of a tent,

Covered us round ; and in the midst I stood,
Weary and faint, and face to face with one,
Whose voice, whose look, dispenses life and death,
Whose heart knows no relentings. Instantly
A light was kindled, and the bandit spoke.
“ I know thee. Thou hast sought us, for the sport
Slipping thy blood-hounds with a hunter’s cry ;
And thou hast found at last. Were I as thou,
I in thy grasp as thou art now in ours,
Soon should I make a midnight spectacle,
Soon, limb by limb, be mangled on a wheel,
Then gibbeted to blacken for the vultures.
But I would teach thee better—how to spare.
Write as I dictate. If thy ransom comes,
Thou liv’st. If not—but answer not, I pray,
Lest thou provoke me. I may strike thee dead ;
And know, young man, it is an easier thing
To do it than to say it. Write, and thus.”—

I wrote. “ ’Tis well,” he cried. “ A peasant boy,
Trusty and swift of foot, shall bear it hence.
Meanwhile lie down and rest. This cloak of mine
Will serve thee ; it has weathered many a storm.”
The watch was set ; and twice it had been changed,
When morning broke, and a wild bird, a hawk,

Flew in a circle, screaming. I looked up,
And all were gone, save him who now kept guard,
And on his arms lay musing. Young he seemed,
And sad, as though he could indulge at will
Some secret sorrow. "Thou shrink'st back," he
said.

"Well may'st thou, lying, as thou dost, so near
A ruffian—one for ever linked and bound
To guilt and infamy. There was a time
When he had not perhaps been deemed unworthy,
When he had watched that planet to its setting,
And dwelt with pleasure on the meanest thing
That nature has given birth to. Now 'tis past,

Wouldst thou know more? My story is an old one.
I loved, was scorned ; I trusted, was betrayed ;
And in my anguish, my necessity,
Met with the fiend, the tempter—in Rusconi.
"Why thus?" he cried. "Thou would'st be free
and dar'st not.

Come and assert thy birth-right while thou can'st.
A robber's cave is better than a dungeon ;
And death itself, what is it at the worst,
What, but a harlequin's leap? Him I had known,
Had served with, suffered with ; and on the walls

Of Capua, while the moon went down, I swore
Allegiance on his dagger. Dost thou ask
How I have kept my oath ? Thou shalt be told,
Cost what it may. But grant me, I implore,
Grant me a passport to some distant land,
That I may never, never more be named.
Thou wilt, I know thou wilt.

Two months ago,

When on a vineyard-hill we lay concealed
And scattered up and down as we were wont,
I heard a damsel singing to herself,
And soon espied her, coming all alone,
In her first beauty. Up a path she came,
Leafy and intricate, singing her song,
A song of love, by snatches ; breaking off
If but a flower, an insect in the sun
Pleased for an instant ; then as carelessly
The strain resuming, and, where'er she stopt,
Rising on tiptoe underneath the boughs
To pluck a grape in very wantonness.
Her look, her mien and maiden-ornaments
Showed gentle birth ; and, step by step, she came
Nearer and nearer to the dreadful snare.
None else were by ; and, as I gazed unseen,

Her youth, her innocence and gaiety
Went to my heart ; and, starting up, I breathed,
' Fly—for your life !' Alas, she shrieked, she fell ;
And, as I caught her falling, all rushed forth.
' A wood-nymph !' cried Rusconi. ' By the light,
Lovely as Hebe ! Lay her in the shade.'
I heard him not. I stood as in a trance.
' What,' he exclaimed, with a malicious smile,
' Wouldst thou rebel ?' I did as he required.
' Now bear her hence to the well-head below ;
A few cold drops will animate this marble.
Go ! 'Tis an office all will envy thee ;
But thou hast earned it.' As I staggered down,
Unwilling to surrender her sweet body,
Her golden hair dishevelled on a neck
Of snow, and her fair eyes closed as in sleep,
Frantic with love, with hate, ' Great God !' I cried,
(I had almost forgotten how to pray,
But there are moments when the courage comes,)
' Why may I not, while yet—while yet I can,
Release her from a thraldom worse than death ?'
' Twas done as soon as said. I kissed her brow,
And smote her with my dagger. A short cry
She uttered, but she stirred not ; and to heaven

Her gentle spirit fled. 'Twas where the path
In its descent turned suddenly. No eye
Observed me, though their steps were following fast.
But soon a yell broke forth, and all at once
Levelled their deadly aim. Then I had ceased
To trouble or be troubled, and had now
(Would I were there !) been slumbering in my
grave,

Had not Rusconi with a terrible shout
Thrown himself in between us, and exclaimed,
Grasping my arm, ' 'Tis bravely, nobly done !
Is it for deeds like these thou wear'st a sword ?
Was this the business that thou cam'st upon ?
—But 'tis his first offence, and let it pass.
Like the young tiger he has tasted blood,
And may do much hereafter. He can strike
Home to the hilt.' Then in an under tone,
' Thus wouldst thou justify the pledge I gave,
When in the eyes of all I read distrust ?
For once,' and on his cheek methought I saw
The blush of virtue, ' I will save thee, Albert ;
Again I cannot.' "

Ere his tale was told,
As on the heath we lay, my ransom came ;

And in six days, with no ungrateful mind,
Albert was sailing on a quiet sea.

—But the night wears, and thou art much in need
Of rest. The young Antonio, with his torch,
Is waiting to conduct thee to thy chamber.

NAPLES.

This region, surely, is not of the earth.*
Was it not dropt from heaven? Not a grove,
Citron or pine or cedar, not a grot,
Sea-worn and mantled with the gadding vine,
But breathes enchantment. Not a cliff but flings
On the clear wave some image of delight,
Some cabin-roof glowing with crimson flowers,
Some ruined temple or fallen monument,
To muse on as the bark is gliding by.
And be it mine to muse there, mine to glide,
From day-break, when the mountain pales his fire
Yet more and more, and from the mountain-top,
Till then invisible, a smoke ascends,
Solemn and slow, as erst from Ararat,
When he, the patriarch, who escaped the flood,
Was with his household sacrificing there—
From day-break to that hour, the last and best,
When, one by one, the fishing-boats come forth,

* Un pezzo di cielo caduto in terra. SANNAZARO.

Each with its glimmering lantern at the prow,
 And, when the nets are thrown, the evening hymn
 Steals o'er the trembling waters.

Every where

Fable and truth have shed, in rivalry,
 Each her peculiar influence. Fable came,
 And laughed and sung, arraying truth in flowers,
 Like a young child her grandam. Fable came,
 Earth, sea and sky reflecting, as she flew,
 A thousand, thousand colours not their own :
 And at her bidding, lo ! a dark descent
 To Tarfarus, and those thrice happy fields,
 Those fields with ether pure and purple light
 Ever invested, scenes by him portrayed,*
 Who here was wont to wander, here invoke
 The sacred Muses,† here receive, record
 What they revealed, and on the western shore
 Sleeps in a silent grove, o'erlooking thee,
 Beloved Parthenope.

Yet here, methinks,
 Truth wants no ornament, in her own shape
 Filling the mind by turns with awe and love,
 By turns inclining to wild ecstacy,

* Virgil.

† Quarum sacra fero; ingenti percussus amore.

And soberest meditation. Here the vines
Wed, each her elm, and o'er the golden grain
Hang their luxuriant clusters, checkering
The sunshine ; where, when cooler shadows fall,
And the mild moon her fairy net-work weaves,
The lute, or mandoline, accompanied
By many a voice yet sweeter than their own,
Kindles, nor slowly ; and the dance* displays
The gentle arts and witcheries of love,
Its hopes and fears and feignings, till the youth
Drops on his knee as vanquished, and the maid,
Her tambourine uplifting with a grace,
Nature's, and nature's only, bids him rise.

But here the mighty monarch underneath,
He in his palace of fire, diffuses round
A dazzling splendour. Here, unseen, unheard,
Opening another Eden in the wild,
He works his wonders ; save, when issuing forth
In thunder, he blots out the sun, the sky,
And, mingling all things earthly as in scorn,
Exalts the valley, lays the mountain low,
Pours many a torrent from his burning lake,
And in an hour of universal mirth,

* The Tarantella.

What time the trump proclaims the festival,
Buries some capital city, there to sleep
The sleep of ages—till a plough, a spade
Disclose the secret, and the eye of day
Glares coldly on the streets, the skeletons,
Each in his place, each in his gay attire,
And eager to enjoy.

Let us go round,

And let the sail be slack, the course be slow,
That at our leisure, as we coast along,
We may contemplate, and from every scene
Receive its influence. The Cumæan towers,
There did they rise, sun-gilt ; and here thy groves,
Delicious Baiæ. Here (what would they not ?)
The masters of the earth, unsatisfied,
Built in the sea ; and now the boatman steers
O'er many a crypt and vault yet glimmering,
O'er many a broad and indestructible arch,
The deep foundations of their palaces ;
Nothing now heard ashore, so great the change,
Save when the sea-mew clamours, or the owl
Hoots in the temple.

What the mountainous isle,*

* Capreæ.

Seen in the south? 'Tis where a monster dwelt,*
Hurling his victims from the topmost cliff;
Then and then only merciful, so slow,
So subtle were the tortures they endured.
Fearing and feared he lived, cursing and cursed;
And still the dungeons in the rock breathe out
Darkness, distemper. Strange, that one so vile
Should from his den strike terror thro' the world;
Should, where withdrawn in his decrepitude,
Say to the noblest, be they where they might,
"Go from the earth!" and from the earth they went.
Yet such things were—and will be, when mankind,
Losing all virtue, lose all energy;
And for the loss incur the penalty,
Trodden down and trampled.

Let us turn the prow,
And in the track of him who went to die,†
Traverse this valley of waters, landing where
A waking dream awaits us. At a step
Two thousand years roll backward, and we stand,
Like those so long within that awful place,‡
Immoveable, nor asking, Can it be?

* Tiberius.

† The Elder Pliny. See the letter in which his nephew relates to Tacitus the circumstances of his death.

‡ Pompeii.

Once did I linger there alone, till day
Closed, and at length the calm of twilight came,
So grateful, yet so solemn ! At the fount,
Just where the three ways meet, I stood and looked,
('Twas near a noble house, the house of Pansa,)
And all was still as in the long, long night
That followed, when the shower of ashes fell,
When they that sought Pompeii sought in vain ;
It was not to be found. But now a ray,
Bright and yet brighter, on the pavement glanced,
And on the wheel-track worn for centuries,
And on the stepping-stones from side to side,
O'er which the maidens, with their water-urns,
Were wont to trip so lightly. Full and clear,
The moon was rising, and at once revealed
The name of every dweller and his craft ;
Shining throughout with an unusual lustre,
And lighting up this city of the dead.

Mark, where within, as though the embers lived,
The ample chimney-vault is dun with smoke.
There dwelt a miller ; silent and at rest
His mill-stones now. In old companionship
Still do they stand as on the day he went,
Each ready for its office—but he comes not.

And there, hard by, (where one in idleness
Has stopt to scrawl a ship, an armed man ;
And in a tablet on the wall we read
Of shows ere long to be,) a sculptor wrought,
Nor meanly ; blocks, half-chiselled into life,
Waiting his call. Here long, as yet attests
The trodden floor, an olive merchant drew
From many an earthen jar, no more supplied ;
And here from his a vintner served his guests
Largely, the stain of his o'erflowing cups
Fresh on the marble. On the bench beneath
They sate and quaffed and looked on them that
passed,
Gravely discussing the last news from Rome.

But lo, engraven on a threshold-stone,
That word of courtesy, so sacred once,
Hail ! At a master's greeting we may enter.
And lo ! a fairy palace ! every where,
As through the courts and chambers we advance,
Floors of Mosaic, walls of arabesque,
And columns clustering in patrician splendour.
But hark, a footstep ! May we not intrude ?
And now, methinks, I hear a gentle laugh,
And gentle voices mingling as in converse !

—And now a harp-string as struck carelessly,
And now—along the corridor it comes—

I cannot err, a filling as of baths !

—Ah, no, 'tis but a mockery of the sense,
Idle and vain ! We are but where we were ;
Still wandering in a city of the dead !

THE BAG OF GOLD.

I dine very often with the good old Cardinal ** and, I should add, with his cats: for they always sit at his table, and are much the gravest of the company. His beaming countenance makes us forget his age; nor did I ever see it clouded till yesterday, when, as we were contemplating the sun-set from his terrace, he happened, in the course of our conversation, to allude to an affecting circumstance in his early life.

He had just left the university of Palermo, and was entering the army, when he became acquainted with a young lady of great beauty and merit, a Sicilian, of a family as illustrious as his own. Living near each other, they were often together; and, at an age like theirs, friendship soon turns to love. But his father, for what reason I forget, refused his consent to their union; till, alarmed at the declining health of his son, he promised to oppose it no longer, if, after a separation of three years, they continued as much in love as ever.

Relying on that promise, he said, I set out on a

long journey ; but in my absence the usual arts were resorted to. Our letters were intercepted ; and false rumours were spread—first of my indifference, then of my inconstancy, then of my marriage with a rich heiress of Sienna ; and when at length I returned to make her my own, I found her in a convent of Ursuline Nuns. She had taken the veil ; and I, said he with a sigh—what else remained for me ?—I went into the church.

Yet many, he continued, as if to turn the conversation, very many have been happy though we were not ; and, if I am not abusing an old man's privilege, let me tell you a story with a better catastrophe. It was told to me when a boy ; and you may not be unwilling to hear it, for it bears some resemblance to that of the Merchant of Venice.

We were now arrived at a pavilion that commanded one of the noblest prospects imaginable ; the mountains, the sea, and the islands, illuminated by the last beams of day ; and, sitting down there, he proceeded with his usual vivacity ; for the sadness that had come across him was gone.

There lived in the fourteenth century, near Bologna, a widow lady of the Lambertini family, called Madonna Lucrezia, who in a revolution of the state had known the bitterness of poverty, and

had even begged her bread ; kneeling day after day like a statue at the gate of the cathedral ; her rosary in her left hand, and her right held out for charity ; her long black veil concealing a face that had once adorned a court, and had received the homage of as many sonnets as Petrarch has written on Laura.

But fortune had at last relented ; a legacy from a distant relation had come to her relief ; and she was now the mistress of a small inn at the foot of the Appenines ; where she entertained as well as she could, and where those only stopped who were contented with a little. The house was still standing, when in my youth I passed that way ; though the sign of the White Cross,* the cross of the Hospitallers, was no longer to be seen over the door ; a sign which she had taken, if we may believe the tradition there, in honour of a maternal uncle, a grand master of that order, whose achievements in Palestine she would sometimes relate. A mountain-stream ran through the garden ; and at no great distance, where the road turned on its way to Bologna, stood a little chapel, in which a lamp was always burning before a picture of the Virgin, a picture of great antiquity, the work of some Greek artist.

* La Croce Bianca.

Here she was dwelling, respected by all who knew her; when an event took place which threw her into the deepest affliction. It was at noon-day in September that three foot travellers arrived, and, seating themselves on a bench under her vine-trellis, were supplied with a flagon of Aleatico by a lovely girl, her only child, the image of her former self. The eldest spoke like a Venetian, and his beard was short and pointed after the fashion of Venice. In his demeanour he affected great courtesy, but his look inspired little confidence; for when he smiled, which he did continually, it was with his lips only, not with his eyes; and they were always turned from yours. His companions were bluff and frank in their manner, and on their tongues had many a soldier's oath. In their hats they wore a medal, such as in that age was often distributed in war; and they were evidently subalterns in one of those free bands which were always ready to serve in any quarrel, if a service it could be called, where a battle was little more than a mockery, and the slain, as on an opera stage, were up and fighting to-morrow. Overcome with the heat, they threw aside their cloaks; and, with their gloves tucked under their belts, continued for some time in earnest conversation.

At length they rose to go ; and the Venetian thus addressed their hostess. “ Excellent lady, may we leave under your roof, for a day or two, this bag of gold ? ” “ You may,” she replied gaily. “ But remember, we fasten only with a latch. Bars and bolts, we have none in our village ; and, if we had, where would be your security ? ” “ In your word, lady.”

“ But what if I died to-night ? Where would it be then ? ” said she, laughing. “ The money would go to the church, for none could claim it.”

“ Perhaps you will favour us with an acknowledgment.”

“ If you will write it.”

An acknowledgment was written accordingly, and she signed it before Master Bartolo, the village physician, who had just called by chance to learn the news of the day ; the gold to be delivered when applied for, but to be delivered (these were the words) not to one—nor to two—but to the three ; words wisely introduced by those to whom it belonged, knowing what they knew of each other. The gold they had just released from a miser’s chest in Perugia ; and they were now on a scent that promised more.

They and their shadows were no sooner departed,

than the Venetian returned, saying, “ Give me leave to set my seal on the bag, as the others have done;” and she placed it on a table before him. But in that moment she was called away to receive a cavalier, who had just dismounted from his horse ; and when she came back it was gone. The temptation had proved irresistible ; and the man and the money had vanished together.

“ Wretched woman that I am ! ” she cried, as in an agony of grief she fell on her daughter’s neck, “ What will become of us ? Are we again to be cast out into the wide world ? . . . Unhappy child, would that thou hadst never been born ! ” and all day long she lamented ; but her tears availed her little. The others were not slow in returning to claim their due ; and there were no tidings of the thief ; he had fled far away with his plunder. A process against her was instantly begun in Bologna ; and what defence could she make ; how release herself from the obligation of the bond ? Wilfully or in negligence she had parted with the gold ; she had parted with it to one, when she should have kept it for all ; and inevitable ruin awaited her ! “ Go, Gianetta ; ” said she to her daughter, “ take this veil which your mother has worn and wept under so often, and implore the counsellor Calderino

to plead for us on the day of trial. He is generous, and will listen to the unfortunate. But, if he will not, go from door to door; Monaldi cannot refuse us. Make haste, my child; but remember the chapel as you pass by it. Nothing prospers without a prayer."

Alas, she went, but in vain. These were retained against them; those demanded more than they had to give; and all bade them despair. What was to be done? No advocate; and the cause to come on to-morrow!

Now Gianetta had a lover; and he was a student of the law, a young man of great promise, Lorenzo Martelli. He had studied long and diligently under that learned lawyer, Giovanni Andreas, who, though little of stature, was great in renown, and by his contemporaries was called the Archdoctor, the Rabbi of Doctors, the Light of the World. Under him he had studied, sitting on the same bench with Petrarch; and also under his daughter Novella, who would often lecture to the scholars, when her father was otherwise engaged, placing herself behind a small curtain, lest her beauty* should divert

* Ce pourroit être, says Bayle, la matière d'un joli problème: on pourroit examiner si cette fille avangoit, ou si elle retardoit le profit de ses auditeurs, en leur cachant son beau visage. Il y auroit cent choses à dire pour et contre la-dessus.

their thoughts ; a precaution in this instance at least unnecessary, Lorenzo having lost his heart to another.

To him she flies in her necessity ; but of what assistance can he be ? He has just taken his place at the bar, but he has never spoken ; and how stand up alone, unpractised and unprepared as he is, against an array that would alarm the most experienced ? “ Were I as mighty as I am weak,” said he, “ my fears for you would make me as nothing. But I will be there, Gianetta ; and may the friend of the friendless give me strength in that hour ! Even now my heart fails me ; but, come what will, while I have a loaf to share, you and your mother shall never want. I will beg through the world for you.”

The day arrives, and the court assembles. The claim is stated, and the evidence given. And now the defence is called for—but none is made ; not a syllable is uttered ; and, after a pause and a consultation of some minutes, the judges are proceeding to give judgment, silence having been proclaimed in the court, when Lorenzo rises and thus addresses them. “ Reverend signors. Young as I am, may I venture to speak before you ? I would speak in behalf of one who has none else to help

her; and I will not keep you long. Much has been said—much on the sacred nature of the obligation; and we acknowledge it in its full force. Let it be fulfilled, and to the last letter. It is what we solicit, what we require. But to whom is the bag of gold to be delivered? What says the bond? Not to one—not to two—but to the three. Let the three stand forth and claim it."

From that day, (for who can doubt the issue?) none were sought, none employed, but the subtle, the eloquent Lorenzo. Wealth followed fame; nor need I say how soon he sat at his marriage-feast, or who sat beside him.

A CHARACTER.

One of two things Montrioli may have,
My envy or compassion. Both he cannot.
Yet on he goes, numbering as miseries,
What least of all he would consent to lose,
What most indeed he prides himself upon,
And, for not having, most despises me.

“ At morn the minister exacts an hour ;
At noon the king. Then comes the council-board ;
And then the chasse, the supper. When, ah when,
The leisure and the liberty I sigh for ?
Not when at home ; at home a miscreant crew,
That now no longer serve me, mine the service.
And then that old hereditary bore,
The steward, his stories longer than his rent-roll,
Who enters, quill in ear, and, one by one,
As though I lived to write, and wrote to live,
Unrolls his leases for my signature.”

He clanks his fetters to disturb my peace.
Yet who would wear them, and become the slave

Of wealth and power, renouncing willingly
His freedom, and the hours that fly so fast,
A burden or a curse when misemployed,
But to the wise how precious—every day
A little life, a blank to be inscribed
With gentle deeds, such as in after-time
Console, rejoice, whene'er we turn the leaf
To read them ? All, wherever in the scale,
Have, be they high or low, or rich or poor,
Inherit they a sheep-hook or a sceptre,
Much to be grateful for ; but most has he,
Born in that middle sphere, that temperate zone,
Where knowledge lights his lamp, there most secure,
And wisdom comes, if ever, she who dwells
Above the clouds, above the firmament,
That seraph sitting in the heaven of heavens.

What men most covet, wealth, distinction, power,
Are baubles nothing worth, that only serve
To rouse us up, as children in the schools
Are roused up to exertion. The reward
Is in the race we run, not in the prize ;
And they, the few, that have it ere they earn it,
Having, by favour or inheritance,
These dangerous gifts placed in their idle hands,

And all that should await on worth well-tried,
All in the glorious days of old reserved
For manhood most mature or reverend age,
Know not, nor ever can, the generous pride
That glows in him who on himself relies,
Entering the lists of life.

PÆSTUM.

They stand between the mountains and the sea,
Awful memorials, but of whom we know not !
The seaman, passing, gazes from the deck.
The buffalo-driver, in his shaggy cloak,
Points to the work of magic and moves on.
Time was they stood along the crowded street,
Temples of gods ! and on their ample steps
What various habits, various tongues beset
The brazen gates for prayer and sacrifice !
Time was perhaps the third was sought for justice ;
And here the accuser stood, and therē the accused ;
And here the judges sate, and heard, and judged.
All silent now !—as in the ages past,
Trodden under foot and mingled, dust with dust.

How many centuries did the sun go round
From Mount Alburnus to the Tyrrhene sea,
While, by some spell rendered invisible,
Or, if approached, approached by him alone
Who saw as though he saw not, they remained

As in the darkness of a sepulchre,
Waiting the appointed time ! All, all within
Proclaims that Nature had resumed her right,
And taken to herself what man renounced ;
No cornice, triglyph, or worn abacus,
But with thick ivy hung or branching fern ;
Their iron-brown o'erspread with brightest verdure.

From my youth upward have I longed to tread
This classic ground—And am I here at last ?
Wandering at will through the long porticoes,
And catching, as through some majestic grove,
Now the blue ocean, and now, chaos-like,
Mountains and mountain-gulfs, and, half-way up,
Towns like the living rock from which they grew ?
A cloudy region, black and desolate,
Where once a slave withstood a world in arms.*

The air is sweet with violets, running wild
Mid broken friezes and fallen capitals ;
Sweet as when Tully, writing down his thoughts,
Those thoughts so precious and so lately lost,
(Turning to thee, divine philosophy,
Ever at hand to calm his troubled soul,)
Sailed slowly by, two thousand years ago,

* Spartacus. See Plutarch in the Life of Crassus.

For Athens ; when a ship, if northeast winds
Blew from the Pæstan gardens, slacked her course.

On as he moved along the level shore,
These temples, in their splendour eminent
Mid arcs and obelisks, and domes and towers,
Reflecting back the radiance of the west,
Well might he dream of glory ! Now, coiled up,
The serpent sleeps within them ; the she-wolf
Suckles her young : and, as alone I stand
In this, the nobler pile, the elements
Of earth and air its only floor and covering,
How solemn is the stillness ! Nothing stirs
Save the shrill-voiced cicala flitting round
On the rough pediment to sit and sing ;
Or the green lizard rustling through the grass,
And up the fluted shaft with short quick spring,
To vanish in the chinks that time has made.

In such an hour as this, the sun's broad disk
Seen at his setting, and a flood of light
Filling the courts of these old sanctuaries,
(Gigantic shadows, broken and confused,
Athwart the innumerable columns flung,) In such an hour he came, who saw and told,
Led by the mighty genius of the place.

Walls of some capital city first appeared,
Half razed, half sunk, or scattered as in scorn ;
—And what within them ? what but in the midst
These three in more than their original grandeur,
And, round about, no stone upon another ?
As if the spoiler had fallen back in fear,
And, turning, left them to the elements.

'Tis said a stranger in the days of old,
(Some say a Dorian, some a Sybarite ;
But distant things are ever lost in clouds,))
'Tis said a stranger came, and, with his plough,
Traced out the site ; and Posidonia rose,
Severely great, Neptune the tutelar god ;
A Homer's language murmuring in her streets,
And in her haven many a mast from Tyre.
Then came another, an unbidden guest.
He knocked and entered with a train in arms ;
And all was changed, her very name and language !
The Tyrian merchant, shipping at his door
Ivory, and gold, and silk, and frankincense,
Sailed as before, but, sailing, cried, " For Pæstum !"
And now a Virgil, now an Ovid sung
Pæstum's twice-blowing roses ; while, within,
Parents and children mourned—and, every year,

('Twas on the day of some old festival,) Met to give way to tears, and once again, Talk in the ancient tongue of things gone by.* At length an Arab climbed the battlements, Slaying the sleepers in the dead of night ; And from all eyes the glorious vision fled ! Leaving a place lonely and dangerous, Where whom the robber spares, a deadlier foe† Strikes at unseen—and at a time when joy Opens the heart, when summer skies are blue, And the clear air is soft and delicate ; For then the demon works—then with that air The thoughtless wretch drinks in a subtle poison Lulling to sleep ; and, when he sleeps, he dies.

But what are these still standing in the midst ? The earth has rocked beneath ; the thunder-stone Passed thro' and thro', and left its traces there ; Yet still they stand as by some unknown charter ! Oh, they are nature's own ! and, as allied To the vast mountains and the eternal sea, They want no written history ; theirs a voice For ever speaking to the heart of man !

* *Athenæus*, xiv.

† *The Mal'aria*.

AMALFI.

He who sets sail from Naples, when the wind
Blows fragrance from Posilipo, may soon,
Crossing from side to side that beautiful lake,
Land underneath the cliff, where once among
The children gathering shells along the shore,
One laughed and played, unconscious of his fate;*
His to drink deep of sorrow, and, through life,
To be the scorn of them that knew him not,
Trampling alike the giver and his gift,
The gift a pearl precious, inestimable,
A lay divine, a lay of love and war,
To charm, ennable, and from age to age,
Sweeten the labour, when the oar was plied
Or on the Adrian or the Tuscan sea.

There would I linger—then go forth again,
And hover round that region unexplored,
Where to Salvator (when, as some relate,

* Tasso. Sorrento, his birth-place, is on the south side of the gulf of Naples.



By chance or choice he led a bandit's life,
Yet oft withdrew, alone and unobserved,
To wander through those awful solitudes)
Nature revealed herself. Unveiled she stood,
In all her wildness, all her majesty,
As in that elder time, ere man was made.

There would I linger—then go forth again ;
And he who steers due east, doubling the cape,
Discovers, in a crevice of the rock,
The fishing-town, Amalfi. Haply there
A heaving bark, an anchor on the strand,
May tell him what it is ; but what it was,
Cannot be told so soon.

The time has been,
When on the quays along the Syrian coast,
'Twas asked and eagerly, at break of dawn,
“ What ships are from Amalfi ?” when her coins,
Silver and gold, circled from clime to clime ;
From Alexandria southward to Sennaar,
And eastward, through Damascus and Cabul
And Samarcand, to thy great wall, Cathay.

Then were the nations by her wisdom swayed ;
And every crime on every sea was judged
According to her judgments. In her port

Prows, strange, uncouth, from Nile and Niger met,
People of various feature, various speech ;
And in their countries many a house of prayer,
And many a shelter, where no shelter was,
And many a well, like Jacob's in the wild,
Rose at her bidding. Then in Palestine,
By the way-side, in sober grandeur stood
A hospital, that, night and day, received
The pilgrims of the west ; and, when 'twas asked,
“ Who are the noble founders ? ” every tongue
At once replied, “ The merchants of Amalfi.”
That hospital, when Godfrey scaled the walls,
Sent forth its holy men in complete steel ;
And hence, the cowl relinquished for the helm,
That chosen band, valiant, invincible,
So long renowned as champions of the cross,
In Rhodes, in Malta.

For three hundred years,
There, unapproached but from the deep, they dwelt,
Assailed for ever, yet from age to age
Acknowledging no master. From the deep
They gathered in their harvests ; bringing home
In the same ship, relics of ancient Greece,
That land of glory where their fathers lay,

Grain from the golden vales of Sicily,
And Indian spices. When at length they fell,
Losing their liberty, they left mankind
A legacy, compared with which the wealth
Of eastern kings—what is it in the scale ?
The mariner's compass.

They are now forgot,
And with them all they did, all they endured,
Struggling with fortune. When Sicardi stood
On his high deck, his falchion in his hand,
And, with a shout like thunder, cried, “ Come forth,
And serve me in Salerno !” forth they came,
Covering the sea, a mournful spectacle ;
The women wailing, and the heavy oar
Falling unheard. Not thus did they return,
The tyrant slain ; though then the grass of years
Grew in their streets.

There now to him who sails
Under the shore, a few white villages,
Scattered above, below, some in the clouds,
Some on the margin of the dark blue sea,
And glittering through their lemon groves, an-
ounce
The region of Amalfi. Then, half-fallen,

A lonely watch-tower on the precipice,
Their ancient land-mark, comes. Long may it last,
And to the seaman in a distant age,
Though now he little thinks how large his debt,
Serve for their monument !

MONTE CASSINO.

“ What hangs behind that curtain ? ” “ Wouldst thou learn ? ”

If thou art wise, thou wouldst not. ’Tis by some Believed to be his master-work, who looked Beyond the grave, and on the chapel wall, As though the day were come, were come and past, Drew the Last Judgment.* But the wisest err. He who in secret wrought, and gave it life, For life is surely there and visible change, Life, such as none could of himself impart, (They who behold it, go not as they came, But meditate for many and many a day,) Sleeps in the vault beneath. We know not much ; But what we know, we will communicate. ’Tis in an ancient record of the house ; And may it make thee tremble lest thou fall ! Once—on a Christmas eve—ere yet the roof Rung with the hymn of the Nativity,

* Michael Angelo.

There came a stranger to the convent gate,
And asked admittance ; ever and anon,
As if he sought what most he feared to find,
Looking behind him. When within the walls,
These walls so sacred and inviolate,
Still did he look behind him ; oft and long,
With curling, quivering lip, and haggard eye,
Catching at vacancy. Between the fits,
For here, 'tis said, he lingered while he lived,
He would discourse and with a mastery,
A charm by none resisted, none explained,
Unfelt before ; but when his cheek grew pale,
All was forgotten. Then, howe'er employed,
He would break off, and start as if he caught
A glimpse of something that would not be gone ;
And turn and gaze, and shrink into himself,
As though the fiend was there, and, face to face,
Scowled o'er his shoulder.

 Most devout he was ;
Most unremitting in the services ;
Then, only then, untroubled, unassailed ;
And, to beguile a melancholy hour,
Would sometimes exercise that noble art
He learnt in Florence ; with a master's hand,

As to this day the sacristy attests,
Painting the wonders of the Apocalypse.

At length he sunk to rest, and in his cell
Left, when he went, a work in secret done,
The portrait, for a portrait it must be,
That hangs behind the curtain. Whence he drew,
None here can doubt ; for they that come to catch
The faintest glimpse—to catch it and be gone,
Gaze as he gazed, then shrink into themselves,
Acting the self-same part. But why 'twas drawn,
Whether, in penance, to atone for guilt,
Or to record the anguish guilt inflicts,
Or haply to familiarise his mind
With what he could not fly from, none can say,
For none could learn the burden of his soul."

THE HARPER.

It was a harper, wandering with his harp,
His only treasure ; a majestic man,
By time and grief ennobled, not subdued ;
Though from his height descending, day by day,
And, as his upward look at once betrayed,
Blind as old Homer. At a fount he sate,
Well known to many a weary traveller ;
His little guide, a boy not seven years old,
But grave, considerate beyond his years,
Sitting beside him. Each had ate his crust
In silence, drinking of the virgin-spring ;
And now in silence, as their custom was,
The sun's decline awaited.

But the child

Was worn with travel. Heavy sleep weighed down
His eyelids ; and the grandsire, when we came,
Emboldened by his love and by his fear,
His fear lest night o'ertake them on the road,
Humbly besought me to convey them both



PL. 1. A Vision of Le Sathan

A little onward. Such small services
Who can refuse?—Not I; and him who can,
Blest though he be with every earthly gift,
I cannot envy. He, if wealth be his,
Knows not its uses. So from noon till night,
Within a crazed and tattered vehicle,
That yet displayed, in old emblazonry,
A shield as splendid as the Bardi wear,*
We lumbered on together; the old man
Beguiling many a league of half its length,
When questioned the adventures of his life,
And all the dangers he had undergone;
His shipwrecks on inhospitable coasts,
And his long warfare.

They were bound, he said,
To a great fair at Reggio; and the boy,
Believing all the world were to be there,
And I among the rest, let loose his tongue,
And promised me much pleasure. His short trance,
Short as it was, had, like a charmed cup,
Restored his spirit, and, as on we crawled,
Slow as the snail, (my muleteer dismounting,
And now his mules addressing, now his pipe,

* See Note.

And now Luigi,) he poured out his heart,
Largely repaying me. At length the sun
Departed, setting in a sea of gold ;
And, as we gazed, he bade me rest assured
That like the setting would the rising be.

Their harp—it had a voice oracular,
And in the desert, in the crowded street,
Spoke when consulted. If the treble chord
Twanged shrill and clear, o'er hill and dale they
went,

The grandsire, step by step, led by the child ;
And not a rain-drop from a passing cloud
Fell on their garments. Thus it spoke to-day ;
Inspiring joy, and, in the young one's mind,
Brightening a path already full of sunshine.

THE FELUCA.

Day glimmered ; and beyond the precipice,
(Which my mule followed as in love with fear,
Or as in scorn, yet more and more inclining
To tempt the danger where it menaced most,) A sea of vapour rolled. Methought we went
Along the utmost edge of this, our world ;
But soon the surges fled, and we descried
Nor dimly, though the lark was silent yet,
Thy gulf, La Spezzia. Ere the morning gun,
Ere the first day-streak, we alighted there ;
And not a breath, a murmur ! Every sail
Slept in the offing. Yet along the shore
Great was the stir ; as at the noontide hour,
None unemployed. Where from its native rock
A streamlet, clear and full, ran to the sea,
The maidens knelt and sung as they were wont,
Washing their garments. Where it met the tide,
Sparkling and lost, an ancient pinnace lay
Keel upward, and the faggot blazed, the tar

Fumed from the cauldron ; while, beyond the fort,
Whither I wandered, step by step led on,
The fishers dragged their net, the fish within
At every heave fluttering and full of life,
At every heave striking their silver fins
'Gainst the dark meshes. Soon a boatman's shout
Re-echoed ; and red bonnets on the beach,
Waving, recalled me. We embarked and left
That noble haven, where, when Genoa reigned,
A hundred galleys sheltered—in the day,
When lofty spirits met, and, deck to deck,
Doria, Pisani fought ; that narrow field
Ample enough for glory. On we went,
Ruffling with many an oar the crystalline sea,
On from the rising to the setting sun,
In silence—underneath a mountain-ridge,
Untamed, untameable, reflecting round
The saddest purple ; nothing to be seen
Of life or culture, save where, at the foot,
Some village and its church, a scanty line,
Athwart the wave gleamed faintly. Fear of ill
Narrowed our course, fear of the hurricane,
And that yet greater scourge, the crafty Moor,
Who, like a tiger prowling for his prey,

Springs and is gone, and on the adverse coast,
(Where Tripoli and Tunis and Algiers
Forge fetters, and white turbans on the mole
Gather, whene'er the crescent comes displayed
Over the cross,) his human merchandise
To many a curious, many a cruel eye
Expose. Ah, how oft where now the sun
Slept on the shore, have ruthless scimitars
Flashed through the lattice, and a swarthy crew
Dragged forth, ere long to number them for sale,
Ere long to part them in their agony,
Parent and child! How oft where now we rode
Over the billow, has a wretched son,
Or yet more wretched sire, grown gray in chains,
Laboured, his hands upon the oar, his eyes
Upon the land—the land that gave him birth ;
And, as he gazed, his homestall through his tears
Fondly imagined ; when a Christian ship
Of war appearing in her bravery,
A voice in anger cried, “ Use all your strength !”

But when, ah when, do they that can, forbear
To crush the unresisting ? Strange, that men,
Creatures so frail, so soon, alas, to die,
Should have the power, the will to make this world

A dismal prison-house, and life itself,
Life in its prime, a burden and a curse
To him who never wronged them? Who that
breathes

Would not, when first he heard it, turn away
As from a tale monstrous, incredible?
Surely a sense of our mortality,
A consciousness how soon we shall be gone,
Or, if we linger—but a few short years—
How sure to look upon our brother's grave,
Should of itself incline to pity and love,
And prompt us rather to assist, relieve,
Than aggravate the evils each is heir to.

At length the day departed, and the moon
Rose like another sun, illumining
Waters and woods and cloud-capt promontories,
Glades for a hermit's cell, a lady's bower,
Scenes of Elysium, such as night alone
Reveals below, nor often—scenes that fled
As at the waving of a wizard's wand,
And left behind them as their parting gift,
A thousand nameless odours. All was still;
And now the nightingale her song poured forth
In such a torrent of heart-felt delight,



So fast it flowed, her tongue so voluble,
As if she thought her hearers would be gone
Ere half was told. 'Twas where in the northwest,
Still unassailed and unassailable,
Thy pharos, Genoa, first displayed itself,
Burning in stillness on its craggy seat ;
That guiding star so oft the only one,
When those now glowing in the azure vault,
Are dark and silent. 'Twas where o'er the sea,
For we were now within a cable's length,
Delicious gardens hung ; green galleries,
And marble terraces in many a flight,
And fairy arches flung from cliff to cliff,
Wildering, enchanting ; and, above them all,
A palace, such as somewhere in the east,
In Zenestan or Araby the blest,
Among its golden groves and fruits of gold,
And fountains scattering rainbows in the sky,
Rose, when Aladdin rubbed the wondrous lamp ;
Such, if not fairer ; and, when we shot by,
A scene of revelry, in long array
As with the radiance of a setting sun,
The windows blazing. But we now approached
A city far-renowned ; and wonder ceased.

GENOA.

This house was Andrea Doria's. Here he lived ;
And here at eve relaxing, when ashore,
Held many a pleasant, many a grave discourse
With them that sought him, walking to and fro
As on his deck. 'Tis less in length and breadth
Than many a cabin in a ship of war ;
But 'tis of marble, and at once inspires
The reverence due to ancient dignity.

He left it for a better ; and 'tis now
A house of trade, the meanest merchandise
Cumbering its floors. Yet, fallen as it is,
'Tis still the noblest dwelling—even in Genoa !
And hadst thou, Andrea, lived there to the last,
Thou hadst done well ; for there is that without,
That in the wall, which monarchs could not give,
Nor thou take with thee, that which says aloud,
It was thy country's gift to her deliverer.

'Tis in the heart of Genoa, (he who comes,
Must come on foot,) and in a place of stir ;
Men on their daily business, early and late,
Thronging thy very threshold. But when there,

Thou wert among thy fellow-citizens,
Thy children, for they hailed thee as their sire ;
And on a spot thou must have loved, for there,
Calling them round, thou gav'st them more than life,
Giving what, lost, makes life not worth the keeping.
There thou didst do indeed an act divine ;
Nor couldst thou leave thy door or enter in,
Without a blessing on thee.

Thou art now

Again among them. Thy brave mariners,
They who had fought so often by thy side,
Staining the mountain-billows, bore thee back ;
And thou art sleeping in thy funeral chamber.
Thine was a glorious course ; but couldst thou there,
Clad in thy cere-cloth—in that silent vault,
Where thou art gathered to thy ancestors—
Open thy secret heart, and tell us all,
Then should we hear thee with a sigh confess,
A sigh how heavy, that thy happiest hours
Were passed before these sacred walls were left,
Before the ocean-wave thy wealth reflected,
And pomp and power drew envy, stirring up
The ambitious man,* that in a perilous hour
Fell from the plank.

* Fiesco.

MARCO GRIFFONI.

War is a game at which all are sure to lose, sooner or later, play they how they will ; yet every nation has delighted in war, and none more in their day than the little republic of Genoa, whose galleys, while she had any, were always burning and sinking those of the Pisans, the Venetians, the Greeks, or the Turks ; Christian and infidel alike to her.

But experience, when dearly bought, is seldom thrown away altogether. A moment of sober reflection came at last ; and after a victory the most splendid and ruinous of any in her annals, she resolved from that day and for ever to live at peace with all mankind ; having in her long career acquired nothing but glory, and a tax on every article of life.

Peace came, but with none of its blessings. No stir in the harbour, no merchandise in the mart or on the quay ; no song as the shuttle was thrown or the ploughshare broke the furrow. The frenzy had left a languor more alarming than itself. Yet the burden must be borne, the taxes be gathered ; and, year after year, they lay like a curse on the land,

the prospect on every side growing darker and darker, till an old man entered the senate-house on his crutches, and all was changed.

Marco Griffoni was the last of an ancient family, a family of royal merchants ; and the richest citizen in Genoa, perhaps in Europe. His parents dying while yet he lay in the cradle, his wealth had accumulated from the year of his birth ; and so noble a use did he make of it when he arrived at manhood, that wherever he went, he was followed by the blessings of the people. He would often say, “I hold it only in trust for others ;” but Genoa was then at her old amusement, and the work grew on his hands. Strong as he was, the evil he had to struggle with was stronger than he. His cheerfulness, his alacrity left him ; and, having lifted up his voice for peace, he withdrew at once from the sphere of life he had moved in—to become, as it were, another man.

From that time, and for full fifty years, he was seen sitting, like one of the founders of his house, at his desk among his money bags, in a narrow street near the Porto Franco ; and he, who in a famine had filled the granaries of the state, sending to Sicily and even to Egypt, now lived only as for his heirs, though there were none to inherit ; giving

no longer to any, but lending to all—to the rich on their bonds and the poor on their pledges ; lending at the highest rate, and exacting with the utmost rigour. No longer relieving the miserable, he sought only to enrich himself by their misery ; and there he sat in his gown of frieze, till every finger was pointed at him in passing, and every tongue exclaimed, “ There sits the miser !”

But in that character and amidst all that obloquy he was still the same as ever, still acting to the best of his judgment for the good of his fellow-citizens ; and when the measure of their calamities was full, when peace had come, but had come to no purpose, and the lesson, as he flattered himself, was graven deep in their minds, then, but not till then, though his hair had long grown gray, he threw off the mask and gave up all he had, to annihilate at a blow his great and cruel adversaries, those taxes which, when excessive, break the hearts of the people ; a glorious achievement for an individual, though a bloodless one, and such as only can be conceived possible in a small community like theirs.

Alas, how little did he know of human nature ! How little had he reflected on the ruling passion of his countrymen, so injurious to others, and at length so fatal to themselves ! Almost instantly

they grew arrogant and quarrelsome ; almost instantly they were in arms again ; and, before the statue was up that had been voted to his memory, every tax, if we may believe the historian, was laid on as before, to awaken vain regrets and wise resolutions.

A FAREWELL.*

And now farewell to Italy—perhaps
For ever! Yet, methinks, I could not go,
I could not leave it, were it mine to say,
“ Farewell for ever!” Many a courtesy,
That sought no recompense, and met with none
But in the swell of heart with which it came,
Have I experienced; not a cabin-door,
Go where I would, but opened with a smile;
From the first hour, when, in my long descent,
Strange perfumes rose, rose as to welcome me,
From flowers that ministered like unseen spirits;
From the first hour, when vintage-songs broke forth,
A grateful earnest, and the southern lakes,
Dazzlingly bright, unfolded at my feet;
They that receive the cataracts, and ere long
Dismiss them, but how changed—onward to roll
From age to age in silent majesty,
Blessing the nations, and reflecting round
The gladness they inspire.

* Written at Susa, May 1, 1822.

Gentle or rude,

No scene of life but has contributed
Much to remember—from the Polesine,
Where, when the south wind blows, and clouds on
clouds

Gather and fall, the peasant freights his boat,
A sacred ark, slung in his orchard-grove ;
Mindful to migrate when the king of floods*
Visits his humble dwelling, and the keel,
Slowly uplifted over field and fence,
Floats on a world of waters—from that low,
That level region, where no echo dwells,
Or, if she comes, comes in her saddest plight,
Hoarse, inarticulate—on to where the path
Is lost in rank luxuriance, and to breathe
Is to inhale distemper, if not death ;
Where the wild boar retreats, when hunters chafe,
And, when the day-star flames, the buffalo-herd,
Afflicted, plunge into the stagnant pool,
Nothing discerned amid the water-leaves,
Save here and there the likeness of a head,
Savage, uncouth ; where none in human shape
Come, save the herdsman, levelling his length
Of lance with many a cry, or, Tartar-like,

* The Po.

Urging his steed along the distant hill
As from a danger. There, but not to rest,
I travelled many a dreary league, nor turned
(Ah ! then least willing, as who had not been ?)
When in the south, against the azure sky,
Three temples rose in soberest majesty,
The wondrous work of some heroic race.*

But now a long farewell ! Oft, while I live,
If once again in England, once again
In my own chimney-nook, as night steals on,
With half-shut eyes reclining, oft, methinks,
While the wind blusters, and the pelting rain
Clatters without, shall I recall to mind
The scenes, occurrences, I met with here,
And wander in Elysium ; many a note
Of wildest melody, magician-like
Awakening, such as the Calabrian horn,
Along the mountain-side, when all is still,
Pours forth at folding time ; and many a chant,
Solemn, sublime, such as at midnight flows
From the full choir, when richest harmonies
Break the deep silence of thy glens, La Cava ;
To him who lingers there with listening ear,
Now lost and now descending as from heaven !

* The temples of Pæstum.

NOTES.

Page 10, line 4. *As on that Sabbath-eve when he arrived,*

‘J’arrive essoufflé, tout en nage ; le cœur me bat, je vois de loin les soldats à leur poste ; j’accours, je crie d’une voix étouffée. Il étoit trop tard.’ See *Les Confessions*. L. 1.

P. 10, l. 9. *Hesate him down and wept—wept till the morning,*

“Lines of eleven syllables occur almost in every page of Milton ; but though they are not unpleasing, they ought not to be admitted into heroic poetry ; since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epic and tragic measures.”—Johnson.

It is remarkable that he used them most at last. In the *Paradise Regained* they occur oftener than in the *Paradise Lost* in the proportion of ten to one ; and let it be remembered that they supply us with another close, another cadence ; that they add, as it were, a string to the instrument ; and, by enabling the poet to relax at pleasure, to rise and fall with his subject, contribute what is most wanted, compass, variety.

Shakspeare seems to have delighted in them, and in some of his soliloquies has used them four and five times in succession ; an example I have not followed in mine. As in the following instance, where the subject is solemn beyond all others.

To be or not to be, &c.

They come nearest to the flow of an unstudied eloquence, and should therefore be used in the drama ; but why exclusively ? Horace, as we learn from himself, admitted the Musa Pedestris in his happiest hours, in those when he was most at his ease ; and we cannot regret her visits. To her we are indebted for more than half he has left us ; nor was she ever at his elbow in greater dishabille, than when he wrote the celebrated *Journey to Brundusium*.

P. 12, l. 6.—*like him of old*

"To admire or despise St. Bernard as he ought," says Gibbon, "the reader, like myself, should have before the windows of his library, that incomparable landscape."

P. 12, l. 9. *That winds beside the mirror of all beauty,*

There is no describing in words; but the following lines were written on the spot, and may serve perhaps to recall to some of my readers what they have seen in this enchanting country.

I love to watch in silence till the sun
Sets; and Mont Blanc, arrayed in crimson and gold,
Flings his broad shadow half across the lake;
That shadow, though it comes through pathless tracts
Of ether, and o'er Alp and desert drear,
Only less bright, less glorious than himself.
But, while we gaze, 'tis gone! And now he shines
Like burnished silver; all, below, the night's.

Such moments are most precious. Yet there are
Others, that follow fast, more precious still;
When once again he changes, once again
Clothing himself in grandeur all his own;
When, like a ghost, shadowless, colourless,
He melts away into the heaven of heavens;
Himself alone revealed, all lesser things
As though they were not!

P. 15, l. 10. *Two dogs of grave demeanour welcomed me,*

Berri, so remarkable for his sagacity, was dead. His skin is stuffed, and is preserved in the Museum of Berne.

P. 17, l. 14. *But the Bise blew cold;*

The northeast wind. This description was written in June, 1816.

P. 19, l. 4. *St. Bruno's once—*

It was indebted for its foundation to a miracle; as every guest may learn there from a little book that lies on the table in his cell, the cell allotted to him by the fathers.

"In this year the canon died, and, as all believed, in the odour of sanctity: for who in his life had been so holy, in his death so happy? But false are the judgments of men; as the event showeth. For when the hour of his funeral had arrived, when the mourners had entered the church the bearers set down the bier, and every voice was lifted up in the Miserere, suddenly and as none knew how, the lights were extinguished, and the anthem stopt! A dark-

ness succeeded, a silence as of the grave; and these words came in sorrowful accents from the lips of the dead. "I am summoned before a just God!—A just God judgeth me—I am condemned by a just God!"

"In the church," says the legend, "there stood a young man with his hands clasped in prayer, who from that time resolved to withdraw into the desert. It was he whom we now invoke as St. Bruno."

P. 19, l. 16.—*that house so rich of old,
So courteous,*
The words of Ariosto.

Ricca—è cortese a chiunque vi venia.
The valley was formerly called Acqua Bella.

P. 20, l. 15. *Bread to the hungry,*
In the course of the year they entertain from thirty to thirty-five thousand travellers. *Le Père Biselx, Prieur.*

P. 22, l. 14. *Dessaix, who turned the scale.*
"Of all the generals I ever had under me, Dessaix possessed the greatest talents. He loved glory for itself."

P. 24, l. 14. *And gathered from above, below, around,*
The author of Lalla Rookh, a poet of such singular felicity as to give a lustre to all he touches, has written a song on this subject, called the Chrystal-hunters.

P. 24, l. 16. *Once, nor long before,*
M. Ebel mentions an escape almost as miraculous.

P. 29, l. 15.—*a wondrous monument*
Almost every mountain of any rank or condition has such a bridge: The most celebrated in this country is on the Swiss side of St. Gothard.

P. 42, l. 5. *Before the great Mastino*
Mastino de la Scala, the Lord of Verona. Cortusio, the ambassador and historian, saw him so surrounded. L. 6.

This house had been always open to the unfortunate. In the days of Can Grande all were welcome; poets, philosophers, artists, warriors. Each had his apartment, each a separate table; and at the hour of dinner musicians and jesters went from room to room. Dante, as we learn from himself, found an asylum there.

Lo primo tuo rifugio, e'l primo ostello
 Sarà la cortesia del gran Loinbardo,
 Che'n su la scala porta il santo uccello.

Their tombs in the public street carry us back into the times of barbarous virtue ; nor less so do those of the Carrara princes at Padua, though less singular and striking in themselves. Francis Carrara, the Elder, used often to visit Petrarch in his small house at Arquà, and followed him on foot to his grave.

P. 43. l. 9. *My omelet, and a flagon of hill-wine,*
 Originally thus :

My omelet, and a trout, that, as the sun
 Shot his last ray through Zanga's leafy grove,
 Leaped at a golden fly, had happily
 Fled from all eyes;

Zanga is the name of a beautiful villa near Bergamo, in which Tasso finished his tragedy of Torrismondo. It still belongs to his family.

P. 43. l. 14. *Bartering my bread and salt for empty praise.*
 After l. 14, in the MS.

That evening, tended on with verse and song,
 I closed my eyes in heaven, but not to sleep ;
 A Columbine, my nearest neighbour there,
 In her great bounty, at the midnight hour
 Bestowing on the world two Harlequins.

Chapelle and Bachamont fared no better at Salon, à cause d'une comédienne, qui s'avisa d'accoucher de deux petits comédiens.

P. 44, l. 3. *And shall I sup where Juliet at the Masque*

The old palace of the Cappaletti, with its uncouth balcony and irregular windows, is still standing in a lane near the Market-place ; and what Englishman can behold it with indifference ?

When we enter Verona, we forget ourselves, and are almost inclined to say with Dante,

Vieni a veder Montecchi, e Cappelletti.

P. 44, l. 6. *Such questions hourly do I ask myself ;*

It has been observed that in Italy the memory sees more than the eye. Scarcely a stone is turned up that has not some historical association, ancient or modern ; that may not be said to have gold under it.

P. 44, l. 18. *Would they had loved thee less, &c.*
From the sonnet of Filicaja. Italia! Italia! &c.

P. 45, l. 1. *Twice hast thou lived already ;
Twice shown among the nations of the world,*

All our travellers, from Addison downward, have diligently explored the monuments of her former existence; while those of her latter have, comparatively speaking, escaped observation. If I cannot supply the deficiency, I will not follow their example; and happy should I be, if, by an intermixture of verse and prose, of prose illustrating the verse and verse embellishing the prose, I could furnish my countrymen on their travels with a pocket companion.

P. 46, l. 1. *"In this neglected mirror*

This is the only instance, with which I am acquainted, of a ghost in Italy since Brutus sat in his tent.

P. 49, l. 17. *Issuing forth,*

An old huntsman of the family met her in the haze of the morning, and never went out again.

She is still known by the name of Madonna Bianca.

P. 50, l. 16. *Still glowing with the richest hues of art,*

Several were painted by Giorgione and Titian; as, for instance, those of the Fondaco de' Tedeschi and the Ca' Grimani. See Vasari.

P. 51, l. 4.—*the tower of Ezzelin—*

Now an observatory. On the wall there is a long inscription : "Piis carcerem adspergite lacrymis," &c.

Ezzelino is seen by Dante in the river of blood.

P. 51, l. 7. *Him or his horoscope;*

Bonatti was the great astrologer of that day; and all the little princes of Italy contended for him. It was from the top of the tower of Forli that he gave his signals to Guido Novello. At the first touch of a bell the count put on his armour; at the second he mounted his horse, and at the third marched out to battle. His victories were ascribed to Bonatti; and not perhaps without reason. How many triumphs were due to the sooth-sayers of old Rome!

P. 51, l. 21.—*the lagging mules ;*

The passage boats are drawn up and down the Brenta.

P. 52, l. 2. *That child of fun and frolic, Arlecchino.*

A pleasant instance of his wit and agility was exhibited some years ago on the stage at Venice.

"The stammerer was in an agony ; the word was inexorable. It was to no purpose that Harlequin suggested another and another. At length, in a fit of despair, he pitched his head full in the dying man's stomach, and the word bolted out of his mouth to the most distant part of the house." —See Moore's *View of Society in Italy*.

P. 53, l. 8. *A vast metropolis,*

"I love," says a traveller, "to contemplate, as I float along, that multitude of palaces and churches, which are congregated and pressed as on a vast raft."—"And who can forget his walk through the Merceria, where the nightingales give you their melody from shop to shop, so that, shutting your eyes, you would think yourself in some forest-glade, when indeed you are all the while in the middle of the sea ? Who can forget his prospect from the great tower, which once, when gilt, and when the sun struck upon it, was to be descried by ships afar off ; or his visit to St. Mark's church, where you see nothing, tread on nothing, but what is precious ; the floors all agate, jasper ; the roof mosaic ; the aisle hung with the banners of the subject cities ; the front and its five domes affecting you as the work of some unknown people? Yet all this will presently pass away ; the waters will close over it ; and they, that come, row about in vain to determine exactly where it stood."

P. 58, l. 3. *Playing at Mora*

A national game of great antiquity, and most probably the "micare digitis" of the Romans.

P. 61, l. 13. *The brass is gone, the porphyry remains,*

They were placed in the floor as memorials. The brass was engraved with the words addressed by the pope to the emperor, "Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis," &c. Thou shalt tread upon the asp and the basilisk : the lion and the dragon thou shalt trample under foot.

P. 61, l. 16. *Of the proud pontiff—*

Alexander III. He fled in disguise to Venice, and is said to have passed the first night on the steps of San Salvatore.

The entrance is from the Merceria, near the foot of the Rialto ; and it is thus recorded, under his escutcheon, in a small tablet at the door : **Alexandro III. Pont. Max. per noctanti.**

P. 62, l. 8. “*Surely those aged limbs have need of rest !”*
See Geoffroy de Villehardouin, in Script. Byzant. T. xx.

P. 62, l. 18.—*resounding with their feet,*
See Petrarch’s description of them and of the tournament. Rer. Senil. l. 4, ep. 2.

P. 63, l. 7.—*some of fair renown*
From England,

Recenti victoria exultantes, says Petrarch; alluding, no doubt, to the favourable issue of the war in France. This festival began on the 4th of August, 1364.

P. 63, l. 19. *And lo, the madness of the carnival,*

Among those the most followed, there was always a mask in a magnificent habit, relating marvellous adventures, and calling himself Messer Marco Millioni. Millioni was the name given by his fellow-citizens in his life-time to the great traveller Marco Polo. “I have seen him so described,” says Ramusio, “in the Records of the Republic ; and his house has, from that time to this, been called La Corte del Millioni,” the palace of the rich man, the millionaire. It is on the canal of S. Giovanni Chrisostomo ; and, as long as he lived, was much resorted to by the curious and the learned.

P. 63, l. 24.—*the archangel,*

In atto di dar la benedittione, says Sansovino ; and performing the same office as the Triton on the tower of the winds at Athens.

P. 64, l. 8.—*the marble stairs*
La Scala de’ Giganti.

P. 66, l. 6.—*the canal Orfano,*

A deep channel behind the island of S. Giorgio Maggiore.

P. 66, l. 11. *Yet what so gay as Venice ?*

“ How fares it with your world ?” says his highness the devil to Quevedo, on their first interview in the lower re-

gions. "Do I prosper there?" "Much as usual, I believe." "But tell me truly. How is my good city of Venice? Flourishing?" "More than ever." "Then I am under no apprehension. All must go well."

P. 66, l. 22. "*Who were the six we supped with yesternight?*" An allusion to the supper in Candide. c. xxvi.

P. 67, l. 3. "*Who answered me just now?*" See Schiller's Ghost-seer. c. i.

P. 67, l. 7. "*But who moves there, alone among them all?*" See the history of Bragadino, the alchymist, as related by Daru. Hist. de Venise. c. 28.

The person that follows was yet more extraordinary, and is said to have appeared there in 1687. See Hermippus Redivivus.

"Those who have experienced the advantages which all strangers enjoy in that city, will not be surprised that one who went by the name of Signor Gualdi was admitted into the best company, though none knew who or what he was. He remained there some months; and three things were remarked concerning him—that he had a small but inestimable collection of pictures, which he readily showed to any body—that he spoke on every subject with such a mastery as astonished all who heard him—and that he never wrote or received any letter, never required any credit, or used any bills of exchange, but paid for every thing in ready money, and lived respectably, though not splendidly.

"This gentleman being one day at the coffee-house, a Venetian nobleman, who was an excellent judge of pictures, and who had heard of Signor Gualdi's collection, expressed a desire to see them; and his request was instantly granted. After contemplating and admiring them for some time, he happened to cast his eyes over the chamber door, where hung a portrait of the stranger. The Venetian looked upon it, and then upon him. 'This is your portrait, sir,' said he Signor Gualdi. The other made no answer but by a low bow. 'Yet you look,' he continued, 'like a man of fifty; and I know this picture to be of the hand of Titian, who has been dead one hundred and thirty years. How is this possible?' 'It is not easy,' said Signor Gualdi gravely, 'to know all things that are possible; but there is

certainly no crime in my being like a picture of Titian's.' The Venetian perceived that he had given offence, and took his leave.

"In the evening he could not forbear mentioning what had passed to some of his friends, who resolved to satisfy themselves the next day by seeing the picture. For this purpose they went to the coffee-house about the time that Signor Gualdi was accustomed to come there; and, not meeting with him, inquired at his lodgings, where they learnt that he had set an hour before for Vienna. This affair made a great stir at the time."

P. 68, l. 11. *All eye, all ear, no where and every where,*

A Frenchman of high rank, who had been robbed at Venice, and had complained in conversation of the negligence of the police, saying that they were vigilant only as spies on the stranger, was on his way back to the Terra Firma, when his gondola stopped suddenly in the midst of the waves. He inquired the reason; and his gondoliers pointed to a boat with a red flag, that had just made them a signal. It arrived; and he was called on board. "You are the Prince de Craon? Were you not robbed on Friday evening?—I was.—Of what?—Of five hundred ducats.—And where were they?—In a green purse.—Do you suspect any body?—I do, a servant.—Would you know him again?—Certainly." The interrogator with his foot turned aside an old cloak that lay there; and the prince beheld his purse in the hand of a dead man. "Take it, and remember that none set their feet again in a country where they have presumed to doubt the wisdom of the government."

P. 71, l. 12. *Then in close converse,*

I am indebted for this thought to some unpublished travels by the author of Vathek.

P. 72, l. 4.—*and he sung,*

As in the time when Venice was herself,

Goldoni, describing his excursion with the Passalacqua, has left us a lively picture of this class of men.

We were no sooner in the middle of that great lagoon which encircles the city, than our discreet gondolier drew the curtain behind us, and let us float at the will of the waves. At length night came on, and we could not tell where we were. "What is the hour?" said I to the gon-

dolier. "I cannot guess, sir; but, if I am not mistaken, it is the lover's hour." "Let us go home," I replied; and he turned the prow homeward, singing, as he rowed, the twenty-sixth strophe of the sixteenth canto of the *Jerusalem Delivered*.

P. 73, l. 5. *Nor sought my threshold,*

At Venice, if you have *la riva in casa*, you step from your beat into the hall. See Rose's Letters from the North of Italy.

P. 73, l. 7. *The young Bianca found her father's door,*

Bianca Capello. It had been shut, if we may believe the novelist Malespini, by a baker's boy, as he passed by at day-break; and in her despair she fled with her lover to Florence, where he fell by assassination. Her beauty, and her love adventure as here related, her marriage afterwards with the grand duke, and that fatal banquet at which they were both poisoned by the carnival, his brother, have rendered her history a romance.

P. 74, l. 1. *It was St. Mary's eve,*

This circumstance took place at Venice on the first of February, the eve of the feast of the purification of the Virgin, A. D. 944, Pietro Candiano, Doge.

P. 75, l. 13. *Her veil, transparent as the gossamer,*

Among the *Habiti Antichi*, in that admirable book of wood-cuts ascribed to Titian, (A. D. 1590,) there is one entitled *Sposa Venetiana a Castello*. It was taken from an old painting in the *Scuola di S. Giovanni Evangelista*, and by the writer is believed to represent one of the brides here described.

P. 75, l. 20. *That venerable structure*

San Pietro di Castello, the patriarchal church of Venice.

P. 78, l. 15. *They had surprised the corsairs where they lay*

In the lagoons of Caorlo. The creek is still called *Il Porto delle Donzelle*.

P. 79, l. 6. *Laid at his feet;*

They are described by Evelyn and La Lande; and were to be seen in the treasury of St. Mark very lately.

P. 80, l. 1.—*the Rialto*

An English abbreviation. Rialto is the name, not of the

bridge, but of the island from which it is called ; and the Venetians say il ponte di Rialto, as we say Westminster bridge.

In that island is the exchange ; and I have often walked there as on classic ground. In the days of Antonio and Bassanio it was second to none. "I sotto-portichi," says Sansovino, writing in 1580, "sono ogni giorno frequentati da i mercantanti Fiorentini, Genovesi, Milanesi, Spagnuoli, Turchi, e d'altre nationi diverse del mondo, i quali vi concorrono in tanta copia, che questa piazza è annoverata fra le prime dell' universo." It was there that the Christian held discourse with the Jew ; and Shylock refers to it when he says,

Signor Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto you have rated me—

"Andiamo a Rialto"—"L'ora di Rialto"—were on every tongue ; and continue so to the present day, as we learn from the comedies of Goldoni, and particularly from his *Mercanti*.

There is a place adjoining, called Rialto Nuovo ; and so called, according to Sansovino, perche fu fabricato dopo il vecchio.

P. 81, l. 4. *Twenty are sitting as in judgment there* ;

The council of ten and the Giunta, nel quale, says Sanuto, fù messer lo doge. The Giunta at the first examination consisted of ten patricians, at the last of twenty.

This story and the tragedy of the Two Foscari were published, within a few days of each other, in November, 1821.

P. 83, l. 23. *That maid at once the noblest, fairest, best*,

She was a Contarini ; a name coeval with the republic, and illustrated by eight doges. On the occasion of their marriage the Bucentaur came out in its splendour ; and a bridge of boats was thrown across the Canal Grandé for the bridegroom and his retinue of three hundred horse. Sanuto dwells with pleasure on the costliness of the dresses and the magnificence of the processions by land and water. The tournaments in the place of St. Mark lasted three days, and were attended by thirty thousand people.

P. 84, l. 24. *To him whose name, among the greatest now,*
Francesco Sforza. His father, when at work in the field,

was accosted by some soldiers and asked if he would enlist. "Let me throw my mattock at that oak," he replied, "and if it remains there, I will." It remained there; and the peasant, regarding it as a sign, enlisted. He became soldier, general, prince; and his grandson, in the palace at Milan, said to Paulus Jovius, "You behold these guards and this grandeur. I owe every thing to the branch of an oak, the branch that held my grandfather's mattock."

P. 85, l. 5. *I have transgressed, offended wilfully;*

It was a high crime to solicit the intercession of any foreign prince.

P. 87, l. 17.—*the Invisible Three!*

The state inquisitors. For an account of their authority, see page 68.

P. 89, l. 6. *It found him on his knees before the cross,*
He was at mass.—M. Sanuto.

P. 90, l. 2. *He wrote it on the tomb*

Veneno sublatuſ. The tomb is in the church of St. Elena.

P. 90, l. 4. *Among the debtors in his leger-book*

A remarkable instance, among others in the annals of Venice, that her princes were merchants, her merchants princes.

P. 90, l. 16.—*the Pisan,*
Count Ugolino. Inferno, 32.

P. 94, l. 15. *And from that hour have kindred spirits flocked*

"I visited once more," says Alfieri, "the tomb of our master in love, the divine Petrarch; and there, as at Ravenna, consecrated a day to meditation and verse."

He visited also the house; and in the album there wrote a sonnet worthy of Petrarch himself.

O Camaretta, che già in te chiudesti
Quel Grande alla cui fama è angusto il mondo, &c.

P. 96, l. 1. *Neglect the place where, in a graver mood,*

This village, says Boccaccio, hitherto almost unknown even at Padua, is soon to become famous through the world; and the sailor on the Adriatic will prostrate himself, when he discovers the Euganean hills. "Among them,"

will he say, “sleeps the poet who is our glory. Ah, unhappy Florence! You neglected him—You deserved him not.”

P. 96, l. 5. *Half-way up
He built his house,*

“I have built, among the Euganean hills, a small house, decent and proper; in which I hope to pass the rest of my days, thinking always of my dead or absent friends.” Among those still living was Boccacio; who is thus mentioned by him in his will. “To Don Giovanni of Certaldo, for a winter gown at his evening studies, I leave fifty golden florins; truly little enough for so great a man.”

When the Venetians overran the country, Petrarch prepared for flight. “Write your name over your door,” said one of his friends, “and you will be safe.” “I am not so sure of that,” replied Petrarch, and fled with his books to Padua. His books he left to the republic of Venice, laying, as it were, a foundation for the library of St. Mark; but they exist no longer. His legacy to Francis Carrara, a Madonna painted by Giotto, is still preserved in the cathedral of Padua.

P. 97, l. 4.—*in its chain it hangs*

Affirming itself to be the very bucket which Tassoni in his mock heroics has celebrated as the cause of war between Bologna and Modena five hundred years ago.

P. 98, l. 3. *'Tis of a lady in her earliest youth,*

This story is, I believe, founded on fact; though the time and place are uncertain. Many old houses in England lay claim to it.

Except in this instance and another (p. 123), I have every where followed history or tradition; and I would here disburden my conscience in pointing out these exceptions, lest the reader should be misled by them.

P. 108, l. 3.—*and what a light broke forth,*

Among other instances of her ascendancy at the close of the thirteenth century, it is related that Florence saw twelve of her citizens assembled at the court of Boniface the eighth, as ambassadors from different parts of Europe and Asia. Their names are mentioned in *Toscana Illustrata*.

P. 108, l. 8. *In this chapel wrought*

A chapel of the holy virgin in the church of the Carmelites. It is adorned with his paintings, and all the great artists of Florence studied there; Leonardo da Vinci, Fra Bartolomeo, Andrea del Sarto, Michael Angelo, Raphael, &c.

He had no stone, no inscription, says one of his biographers, for he was thought little of in his lifetime.

Se alcun cercasse il marmo, o il nome mio,
La Chiesa e il marmo, una capella e il nome.

It was there that Michael Angelo received the blow on his face. See Vasari, and Cellini.

P. 109, l. 4. *The seat of stone that runs along the wall,*

It exists no longer, the wall having been taken down; but enough of him remains elsewhere. Boccaccio delivered his lectures on the Divina Commedia in the church of S. Stefano.

P. 109, l. 5.—*the belfry-tower,*

It was designed by Giotto, as we read in his epitaph.

P. 109, l. 12. *Many a transgressor sent to his account*

Inferno, 33. A more dreadful vehicle for satire cannot well be conceived.

P. 110, l. 1. *That they might serve to be the gates of heaven,*
A saying of Michael Angelo. They are the work of Lorenzo Ghiberti.P. 110, l. 15. *Nor then forget that chamber of the dead,*
The Chapel de' Depositi, in which are the tombs of the Medici, by Michael Angelo.P. 111, l. 1. *That is the Duke Lorenzo. Mark him well.*

He died early; living only to become the father of Catherine de Medicis. Had an evil spirit assumed the human shape to propagate mischief, he could not have done better.

The statue is larger than the life, but not so large as to shock belief. It is the most real and unreal thing that ever came from the chisel.

P. 111, l. 10. *On that thrice hallowed day,*
The day of All Souls. Il dì de Morti.

P. 111, l. 17. *It must be known—the writing on the wall*
Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ulti!

Perhaps there is nothing in language more affecting than his last testament. It is addressed “To God, the Deliverer,” and was found steeped in his blood.

P. 114, l. 12.—*she who bore them both,*

Of the children that survived her, one fell by a brother, one by a husband, and a third murdered his wife. But that family was soon to become extinct. It is some consolation to reflect that their country did not go unrevenged for the calamities which they had brought upon her. How many of them died by the hands of each other ! .

P. 116, l. 11.—*drawn on the wall*

By Vasari, who attended him on this occasion.

J. A. Thuanus de Vitâ suâ. i.

P. 116, l. 14. *From the sad looks of him who could have told,*
 It was given out that they had died of a contagious fever ; and funeral orations were publicly pronounced in their honour.

Alfieri has written a tragedy on the subject ; if it may be said so, when he has altered so entirely the story and the characters.

P. 117, l. 2.—*Cimabuè*

He was the father of modern painting, and the master of Giotto, whose talent he discovered in the way here alluded to.

“ Cimabuè stood still, and, having considered the boy and his work, he asked him if he would go and live with him at Florence. To which the boy answered that, if his father was willing, he would go with all his heart.”—Vasari.

Of Cimabuè little now remains at Florence, except his celebrated Madonna, larger than the life, in Santa Maria Novella. It was painted, according to Vasari, in a garden near Porta S. Piero, and when finished, was carried to the church in solemn procession with trumpets before it. The garden lay without the walls ; and such was the rejoicing there on the occasion, that the suburb received the name of Borgo Allegri, a name it still bears, though now a part of the city.

P. 117, l. 11. *Beautiful Florence,*

It is somewhere mentioned that Michael Angelo, when he set out from Florence to build the dome of St. Peter's, turned his horse round in the road to contemplate once more that of the cathedral, as it rose in the gray of the morning from among the pines and cypresses of the city, and that he said after a pause, "Come te non voglio! Meglio di te non posso!"* He never indeed spoke of it but with admiration; and, if we may believe tradition, his tomb by his own desire was to be so placed in the Santa Croce as that from it might be seen, when the doors of the church stood open, that noble work of Brunelleschi.

P. 118, l. 6. *Came out into the meadows;*

Once, on a bright November morning, I set out and traced them, as I conceived, step by step; beginning and ending in the church of Santa Maria Novella. It was a walk delightful in itself, and in its associations.

P. 118, l. 13. *Round the green hill they went,*

I have here followed Baldelli. It has been said that Boccaccio drew from his imagination. But is it likely, when he and his readers were living within a mile or two of the spot? Truth or fiction, it furnishes a pleasant picture of the manners and amusements of the Florentines in that day.

P. 119, l. 11. *The morning banquet by the fountain-side,*

At three o'clock. Three hours after sun-rise, according to the old manner of reckoning.

B. 120, l. 11.—*his lowly roof and scanty farm,*

Now belonging by inheritance to the Rangoni, a Modenesian family.

P. 120, l. 19. *'Tis his own sketch—he drew it from himself*

See a very interesting letter from Machiavel to Francesco Vettori, dated the 10th of December, 1513.

P. 121, l. 12.—*sung of old*

For its green wine;

La Verdea. It is celebrated by Rinuccini, Reni, and

* Like thee I will not build one. Better than thee I cannot.

most of the Tuscan poets; nor is it unnoticed by some of ours.

Say he had been at Rome, and seen the relics,
Drunk your Verdea wine, &c.—*Beaumont and Fletcher.*

P. 121, l. 15. *Seven years a prisoner at the city-gate*

Galileo came to Arcetri at the close of the year 1633; and remained there, while he lived, by an order of the Inquisition. It is without the walls, near the Porta Romana.

He was buried with all honour in the church of the Santa Croce.

P. 121, l. 17. *His villa, (justly was it called the Gem,) Il Giojello.*

P. 121, l. 23. *There, unseen,*

Milton went to Italy in 1638. "There it was," says he, "that I found and visited the famous Galileo grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition." "Old and blind," he might have said. Galileo, by his own account, became blind in December, 1637. Milton, as we learn from the date of Sir Henry Wotton's letter to him, had not left England on the 18th of April following.—See *Tiraboschi, and Wotton's Remains.*

P. 122. l. 19. *So near the yellow Tiber's—*

They rise within thirteen miles of each other.

P. 123, l. 10. *Hands, clad in gloves of steel, held up imploring,*

It was in this manner that the first Sforza went down, when he perished in the Pescara.

P. 125, l. 6. *And lo, an atom on that dangerous sea,*

Petrarch, as we learn from himself, was on his way to Incisa; whither his mother was retiring. He was seven months old at the time.

A most extraordinary deluge, accompanied by signs and prodigies, happened a few years afterwards. "On that night," says Giovanni Villani, "a hermit, being at prayer in his hermitage above Vallombrosa, heard a furious trampling as of many horses; and, crossing himself and hurrying to the wicket, saw a multitude of infernal horsemen, all black and terrible, riding by at full speed. When in the name of God he conjured some of them to tell him their purpose, they replied, "We are going, if it be his pleasure, to drown the city of Florence for its wickedness." "This

account," says he, "was given me by the Abbot of Vallombrosa, who had questioned the holy man himself." xi. 2.

P. 126, l. 10. *Towerless,*

There were the "Nobili di Torre" and the "Nobili di Loggia."

P. 127, l. 10. *At the bridge-foot;*

Giovanni Buondelmonte was on the point of marrying an Amidei, when a widow of the Donati family made him break his engagement in the manner here described.

The Amidei washed away the affront with his blood, attacking him, says G. Villani, at the foot of the Ponte Vecchio, as he was coming leisurely along in his white mantle on his white palfrey; and hence many years of slaughter.

O Buondelmonte, quanto mal fuggisti
Le nozze sue, per gli altri conforti!—Dante.

P. 128, l. 3. *It had been well hadst thou slept on, Imelda,*

The story is Bolognese, and is told by Cherubino Ghiradacci in his history of Bologna. Her lover was of the Guelphic party, her brothers of the Ghibelline; and no sooner was this act of violence made known than an enmity, hitherto but half-suppressed, broke out into open war. The Great Place was a scene of battle and bloodshed for forty successive days; nor was a reconciliation accomplished till six years afterwards, when the families and their adherents met there once again, and exchanged the kiss of peace before the cardinal legate; as the rival families of Florence had already done in the Place of S. Maria Novella. Every house on the occasion was hung with tapestry and garlands of flowers.

P. 128, l. 9.—*from the wound
Sucking the poison,*

The Saracens had introduced among them the practice of poisoning their daggers.

P. 128, l. 10. *Yet, when slavery came,
Worse followed,*

It is remarkable that the noblest works of human genius have been produced in times of tumult; when every man was his own master, and all things were open to all. Homer, Dante, and Milton appeared in such times; and we may add Virgil.

P. 129, l. 7. *In every palace was the laboratory,*
As in those of Cosmo I. and his son, Francis.—*Sismondi*,
xvi. 205.

P. 129, l. 15. *Cruel Tophana;*

A Sicilian, the inventress of many poisons; the most celebrated of which, from its transparency, was called Acqueta, or Acqua Tophana.

P. 129, l. 17. *A sign infallible of coming ill,*

The cardinal, Ferdinand de' Medici, is said to have been preserved in this manner by a ring which he wore on his finger: as also Andrea, the husband of Giovanna, queen of Naples.

P. 129, l. 24. *One in the floor—now left, alas, unlocked.*

Il Trabocchetto. See Vocab. degli Accadem. della Crusca. See also Dict. de l'Académie Frangoise. Art. Oubliettes.

P. 130, l. 8. *There, at Caiano,*

Poggio-Caiano, the favourite villa of Lorenzo; where he often took the diversion of hawking. Pulci sometimes went out with him; though, it seems, with little ardour. See La Caccia col Falcone, where he is described as missing; and as gone into a wood, to rhyme there.

P. 130, l. 11. *With his wild lay—*

The Morgante Maggiore. He used to recite it at the table of Lorenzo in the maner of the ancient rhapsodists.

P. 131, l. 3. *Of that old den far up among the hills,*

Caffaggiolo, the favourite retreat of Cosmo, “the father of his country.” Eleonora di Toledo was stabbed there on the 11th of July, 1576, by her husband Pietro de' Medici; and on the 16th of the same month Isabella de' Medici was strangled by hers, Paolo Giordano Orsini, at his villa of Cerreto. They were at Florence, when they were sent for, each in her turn, Isabella under the pretext of a hunting-party; and each in her turn went to die.

Isabella was one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of the age. In the Latin, French, and Spanish languages she spoke not only with fluency, but elegance; and in her own she excelled as an improvisatrice, accompanying herself on the lute. On her arrival at dusk, Paolo presented her with two beautiful greyhounds, that she might

make a trial of their speed in the morning ; and at supper was gay beyond measure. When he retired, he sent for her into his apartment ; and, pressing her tenderly to his bosom, slipped a cord round her neck. She was buried at Florence with great pomp ; but at her burial, says Varchi, the crime divulged itself. Her face was black on the bier.

Eleonora appears to have had a presentiment of her fate. She went when required.; but, before she set out, took leave of her son, then a child, weeping long and bitterly over him.

P. 131, l. 9. *But lo, the sun is setting ;*

I have endeavoured to describe an Italian sun-set as I have often seen it. The conclusion is borrowed from that celebrated passage in Dante,

Era già l'ora, &c.

P. 132, l. 1. *It was an hour of universal joy.*

Before l. 1. in the MS.

The sun ascended, and the eastern sky
Flamed like a furnace, while the western glowed
As if another day was dawning there.

P. 132, l. 15.—*when armies met,*

The Roman and the Carthaginian. Such was the animosity, says Livy, that an earthquake, which turned the course of rivers and overthrew cities and mountains, was felt by none of the combatants. xxii. 5.

P. 133, l. 2. *And by a brook*

A tradition. It has been called, from time immemorial, Il Sanguinetta.

P. 137, l. 9. *Such the dominion of thy mighty voice,*

An allusion to the Cascata delle Marmore, a celebrated fall of the Velino near Terni.

P. 137, l. 14.—*no bush or green or dry,*

A sign in our country as old as Shakspeare, and still used in Italy. "Une branche d'arbre, attachée à une maison rustique, nous annonce les moyens de nous refraîchir. Nous y trouvons du lait et des œufs frais ; nous voilà contents." Mem. de Goldoni.

There is, or was very lately, in Florence a small wine-house with this inscription over the door, Al buon vino non bisogna frasca. Good wine needs no bush.. It was much

frequented by Salvator Rosa, who drew a portrait of his hostess.

P. 138, l. 14. *A narrow glade unfolded, such as spring*

This upper region, a country of dews and dewy lights, as described by Virgil and Pliny, and still, I believe, called *La Rosa*, is full of beautiful scenery. Who does not wish to follow the footsteps of Cicero there, to visit the Reatine Tempe and the Seven Waters ?

P. 139, l. 3.—*a sumpter-mule*

Many of these circumstances were suggested by a landscape of Annibal Caracci, now in the Louvre.

P. 140, l. 24. *filling the land with splendour—*

Perhaps the most beautiful villa of that day was the Villa Madama. It is now a ruin ; but enough remains of the plan and the grotesque-work to justify Vasari's account of it.

The Pastor Fido, if not the Aminta, used to be often represented there; and a theatre, such as is here described, was to be seen in the gardens very lately.

P. 141, l. 5. *Fair forms appeared, murmuring melodious verse*

A fashion for ever reviving in such a climate. In the year 1783, the Nina of Paesiello was performed in a small wood near Caserta.

P. 144, l. 4.—*the Appian,*

The street of the tombs in Pompeii may serve to give us some idea of the Via Appia, that Regina Viarum, in its splendour. It is perhaps the most striking vestige of antiquity that remains to us.

P. 144, l. 11. *Horace himself—*

And Augustus in his litter, coming at a still slower rate. He was borne along by slaves ; and the gentle motion allowed him to read, write, and employ himself as in his cabinet. Though Tivoli is only sixteen miles from the city, he was always two nights on the road.—Suetonius.

P. 144, l. 21. *Where his voice faltered*

At the words “ Tu Marcellus eris.” The story is so beautiful, that every reader must wish it to be true.

P. 145, l. 7.—*the centre of their universe,*

From the golden pillar in the Forum the ways ran to the gates, and from the gates to the extremities of the empire.

P. 146, l. 1. *To the twelve tables,*

The laws of the twelve tables were inscribed on pillars of brass, and placed in the most conspicuous part of the forum. Dion. Hal.

P. 146, l. 21. *A thousand torches turning night to day,*

An allusion to Cæsar in his Gallic triumph. Adscendit Capitolium ad lumina, &c. Suetonius.

P. 147, l. 6. *On those so young, well pleased with all they see,*

In the triumph of Æmilius, nothing affected the Roman people like the children of Perseus. Many wept; nor could any thing else attract notice, till they were gone by. Plutarch.

P. 148, l. 13.—*and she who said,*

Taking the fatal cup between her hands,

Sophonisba. The story of the marriage and the poison is well known to every reader.

P. 160, l. 7. *How many realms, pastoral and warlike, lay*
Forty-seven, according to Dionys. Halicar. l. IV.

P. 163, l. 21. *Wunder like strangers*

It was not always so. There were once within her walls “more erected spirits.”

“Let me recall to your mind,” says Petrarch in a letter to old Stephen Colonna, “the walk we took together at a late hour in the broad street that leads from your palace to the Capitol. To me it seems as yesterday, though it was ten years ago. When we arrived where the four ways meet, we stopped; and, none interrupting us, discoursed long on the fallen fortunes of your house. Fixing your eyes steadfastly upon me, and then turning them away full of tears, “I have nothing now,” you said, “to leave my children. But a still greater calamity awaits me—I shall inherit from them all.” You remember the words, no doubt; words so fully accomplished. I certainly do; and as distinctly as the old sepulchre in the corner, on which we were leaning with our elbows at the time.” Epist. Famil. viii. 1.

The sepulchre here alluded to must have been that of

Bibulus; and what an interest it derives from this anecdote! Stephen Colonna was a hero worthy of antiquity; and in his distress was an object, not of pity, but of reverence. When overtaken by his pursuers and questioned by those who knew him not, "I am Stephen Colonna," he replied, "a citizen of Rome!" and, when in the last extremity of battle a voice cried out to him, "Where is now your fortress, Colonna?" "Here," he answered gaily, laying his hand on his heart.

P. 164, l. 12. *Music and painting, sculpture, rhetoric, Music*; and from the loftiest strain to the lowliest, from a Miserere in the Holy Week to the shepherd's humble offering in Advent; the last, if we may judge from its effects, not the least subduing, perhaps the most so.

Once, as I was approaching Frescati in the sunshine of a cloudless December morning, I observed a rustic group by the road-side, before an image of the Virgin, that claimed the devotions of the passenger from a niche in a vineyard-wall. Two young men from the mountains of the Abruzzi, in their long brown cloaks, were playing a Christmas carol. Their instruments were a hautboy and a bagpipe; and the air, wild and simple as it was, was such as she might accept with pleasure. The ingenuous and smiling countenances of these rude minstrels, who seemed so sure that she heard them, and the unaffected delight of their little audience, all younger than themselves, all standing uncovered, and moving their lips in prayer, would have arrested the most careless traveller.

P. 164, l. 13. *And dazzling light and darkness visible,*
Whoever has entered the church of St. Peter's or the Pauline chapel, during the exposition of the holy sacrament there, will not soon forget the blaze of the altar, or the dark circle of worshippers kneeling in silence before it.

P. 164, l. 18. *Ere they came,*

An allusion to the prophecies concerning Antichrist. See the interpretations of Mede, Newton, Clarke, &c.; not to mention those of Dante and Petrarch.

P. 169, l. 6. *And from the latticed gallery came a chant
Of psalms most saint-like, most angelical,*

There was said to be in the choir, among others of the sisterhood, a daughter of Cimarosa.

P. 170, l. 4. '*Twas in her utmost need; nor, while she lives,*
 Her back was at that time turned to the people; but in
 his countenance might be read all that was passing. The
 cardinal who officiated, was a venerable old man, evi-
 dently unused to the ceremony, and much affected by it.

P. 171, l. 9.—*the black pall, the requiem.*

Among other ceremonies a pall was thrown over her,
 and a requiem sung.

P. 172, l. 4. *Unsheathes his wings*
 He is of the beetle-tribe.

P. 173, l. 4. *Those trees, religious once and always green,*

Pliny mentions an extraordinary instance of longevity
 in the ilex. "There is one," says he, "in the Vatican, older
 than the city itself. An Etruscan inscription in letters of
 brass attests that even in those days the tree was held sa-
 cred :" and it is remarkable that there is at this time on
 the Vatican mount an ilex of great antiquity. It is in a
 grove just above the palace garden.

P. 173, l. 9. (*So some aver, and who would not believe ?*)

I did not tell you that just below the first fall, on the side
 of the rock, and hanging over that torrent, are little ruins
 which they show you for Horace's house, a curious situa-
 tion to observe the

Præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus, et uda
 Mobilibus ponaria rivis.

Gray's Letters.

P. 183, l. 6. *When they that robbed were men of better faith,*
 Alluding to Alfonso Piccolomini. He was hanged at
 Florence, March 16, 1591.

P. 183. l. 18. *When along the shore,*

Tasso was returning from Naples to Rome, and had ar-
 rived at Mola di Gaëta, when he received this tribute of
 respect. The captain of the troop was Marco di Sciarra.
 See Manso. Vita del Tasso. Ariosto had a similar adven-
 ture with Filippo Pachione. See Baruffaldi.

P. 188, l. 1. *Three days they lay in ambush at my gate,*
 This story was written in the year 1820, and is founded

on the many narratives which at that time were circulating in Rome and Naples.

P. 215, l. 1. *They stand between the mountains and the sea;*

The temples of Pæstum are three in number; and have survived, nearly nine centuries, the total destruction of the city. Tradition is silent concerning them; but they must have existed now between two and three thousand years.

P. 216, l. 17. *The air is sweet with violets, running wild*

The violets of Pæstum were as proverbial as the roses. Martial mentions them with the honey of Hybla.

P. 216, l. 20. *Those thoughts so precious and so lately lost,*

The introduction to his treatise on glory. Cic. ad Att. xvi. 6. For an account of the loss of that treatise, see Petrarch, Epist. Rer. Senilium. xv. i. and Bayle, Dict. in Alcyonius.

P. 218, l. 8. *'Tis said a stranger in the days of old*

They are said to have been discovered by accident about the middle of the last century.

P. 218, l. 12.—*and Posidonia rose,*

Originally a Greek city under that name, and afterwards a Roman city under the name of Pæstum. See Mitford's Hist. of Greece, chap. x. sect. 2. It was surprised and destroyed by the Saracens at the beginning of the tenth century.

P. 221, l. 10. *The fishing-town, Amalfi.*

Amalfi fell after three hundred years of prosperity; but the poverty of one thousand fishermen is yet dignified by the remains of an arsenal, a cathedral, and the palaces of royal merchants. Gibbon.

P. 222, l. 8. *A hospital, that, night and day, received
The pilgrims of the west;*

It was dedicated to Saint John.

P. 223, l. 1. *Grain from the golden vales of Sicily,*

There is at this day in Syracuse a street called La Strada degli Amalfitani.

P. 223, l. 15. *Not thus did they return,
The tyrant slain;*

It was in the year 839. See Muratori. Art. Chronici Amalphitani Fragmenta.

P. 224, l. 5. *Serve for their monument!*

By degrees, says Giannone, they made themselves famous through the world. The Tarini Amalfitani were a coin familiar to all nations; and their maritime code regulated every where the commerce of the sea. Many churches in the East were by them built and endowed; by them was first founded in Palestine that most renowned military order of St. John of Jerusalem; and who does not know that the mariner's compass was invented by a citizen of Amalfi?

P. 225, l. 1. *"What hangs behind that curtain?"*

This story, if a story it can be called, is fictitious; and I have done little more than give it as I received it. It has already appeared in prose; but with many alterations and additional circumstances.

The abbey of Monte Cassino is the most ancient and venerable house of the Benedictine order. It is situated within fifteen leagues of Naples on the inland road to Rome; and no house is more hospitable.

P. 225, l. 8. *For life is surely there and visible change,*

There are many miraculous pictures in Italy; but none, I believe, were ever before described as malignant in their influence.

At Arezzo, in the church of St. Angelo, there is indeed over the great altar a fresco painting of the Fall of the Angels, which has a singular story belonging to it. It was painted in the fourteenth century by Spinello Aretino, who has there represented Lucifer as changed into a shape so monstrous and terrible, that it is said to have haunted the artist in his dreams, and to have hastened his death, deranging him in mind and body. In the upper part St. Michael is seen in combat with the dragon: the fatal transformation is in the lower part of the picture. Vasari.

P. 229, l. 6. *Within a crazed and tattered vehicle,
Then degraded, and belonging to a Vetturino.*

P. 229, l. 8. *A shield as splendid as the Bardi wear,
A Florentine family of great antiquity. In the sixty-third*

novel of Franco Sacchetti we read, that a stranger, suddenly entering Giotto's study, threw down a shield and departed, saying, "Paint me my arms in that shield;" and that Giotto, looking after him, exclaimed, "Who is he? What is he? He says, Paint me my arms, as if he was one of the Bardi! What arms does he bear?"

P. 232, l. 12. *Doria, Pisani*

Paganino Doria, Nicolo Pisani; those great seamen, who balanced for so many years the fortunes of Genoa and Venice.

P. 232, l. 14. *Ruffling with many an oar the crystalline sea,*

The Feluca is a large boat for rowing and sailing, much used in the Mediterranean.

P. 233, l. 12. *How oft where now we rode*

Every reader of Spanish poetry is acquainted with that affecting romance of Gongora,

Amarrado al duro banco, &c.

Lord Holland has translated it in his Life of Lope de Vega.

P. 236, l. 1. *Here he lived;*

The Piazza Doria, or, as it is now called, the Piazza di San Matteo, insignificant as it may be thought, is to me the most interesting place in Genoa. It was there that Doria assembled the people, when he gave them their liberty, (Siganii Vita Doriæ); and on one side of it is the church he lies buried in, on the other a house, originally of very small dimensions, with this inscription: S. C. Andreæ de Auriæ Patriæ Liberatori Munus Publicum.

The streets of old Genoa, like those of Venice, were constructed only for foot passengers.

P. 236, l. 3. *Held many a pleasant, many a grave discourse,*
See his Life by Sigonio.

P. 236, l. 10. *A house of trade*

When I saw it in 1822, a basket-maker lived on the ground-floor, and over him a seller of chocolate.

P. 237, l. 21. *Before the ocean-wave thy wealth reflected,*
Alluding to the palace which he built afterwards, and in

which he twice entertained the emperor Charles the Fifth. It is the most magnificent edifice on the bay of Genoa.

P. 237, l. 23. *The ambitious man, that in a perilous hour
Fell from the plank.*

For an account of the conspiracy of Fiesco, see Robertson's History of the Emperor Charles the Fifth.

P. 241, l. 4.—*the historian,*

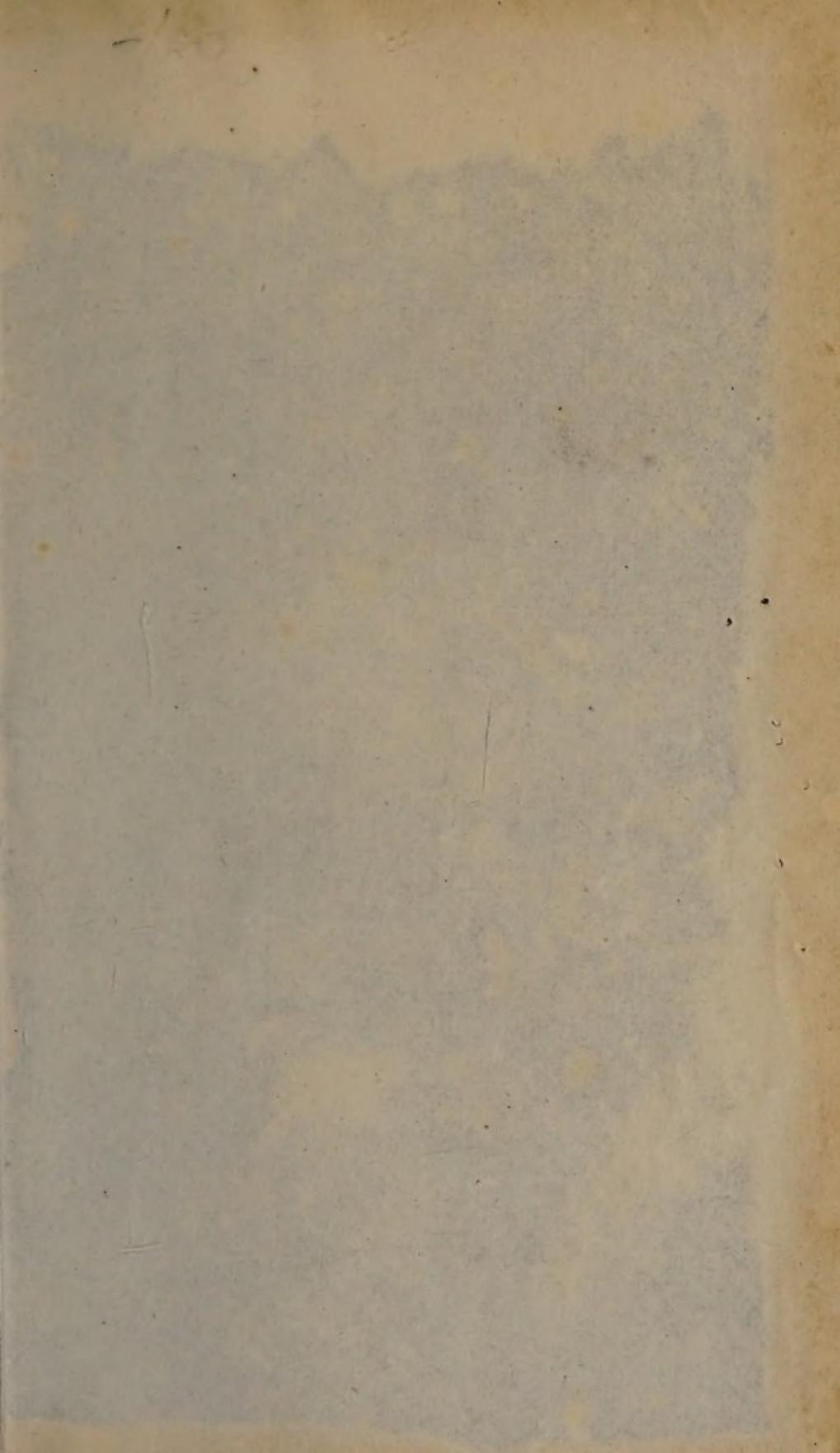
Who he is, I have yet to learn. The story was told to me many years ago by a great reader of the old annalists; but I have searched every where for it in vain.





c.

60 B.C. 19





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